KIPA
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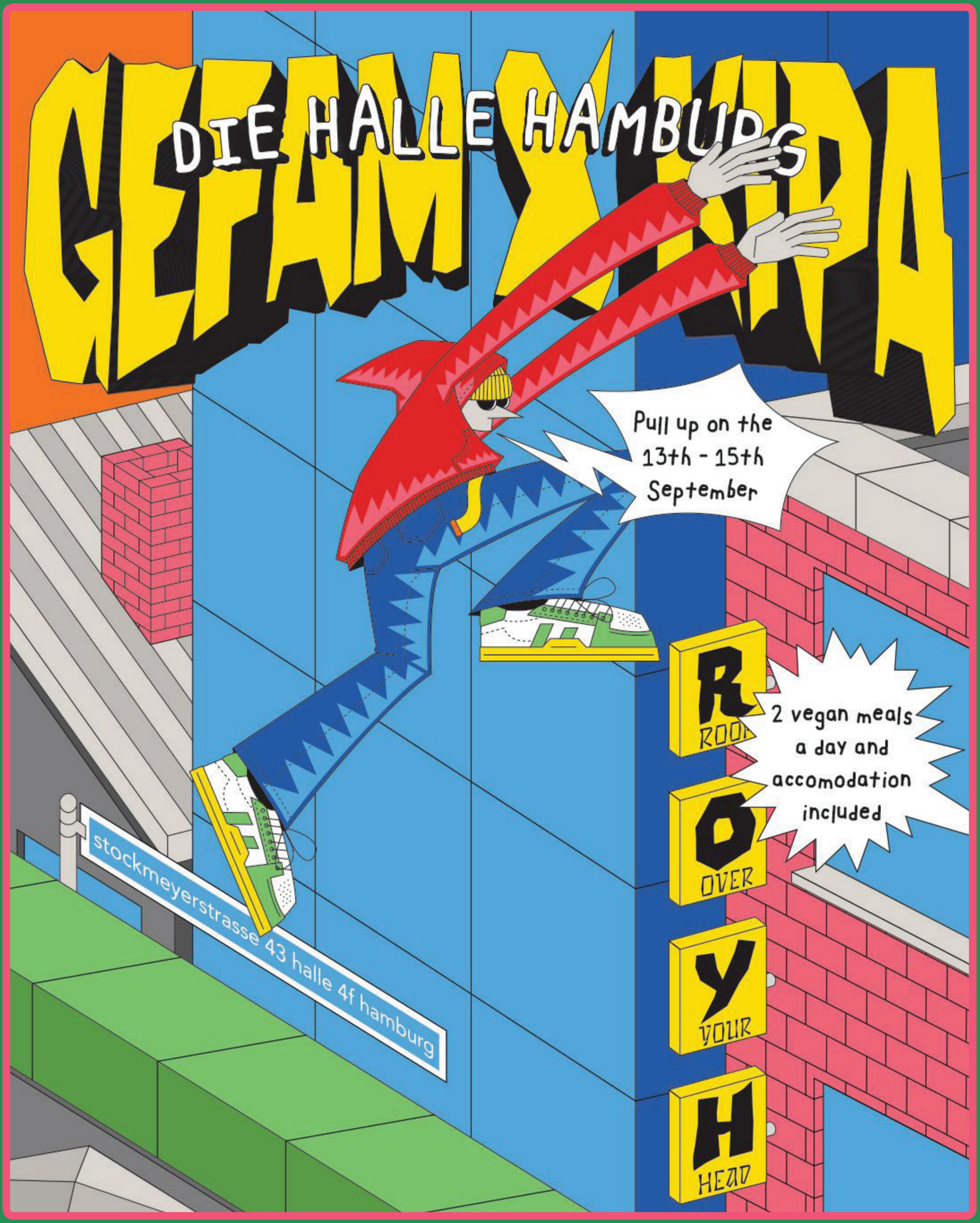
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Pull up on the 13th - 15th September
2 vegan meals a day and accomodation included
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H HEAD
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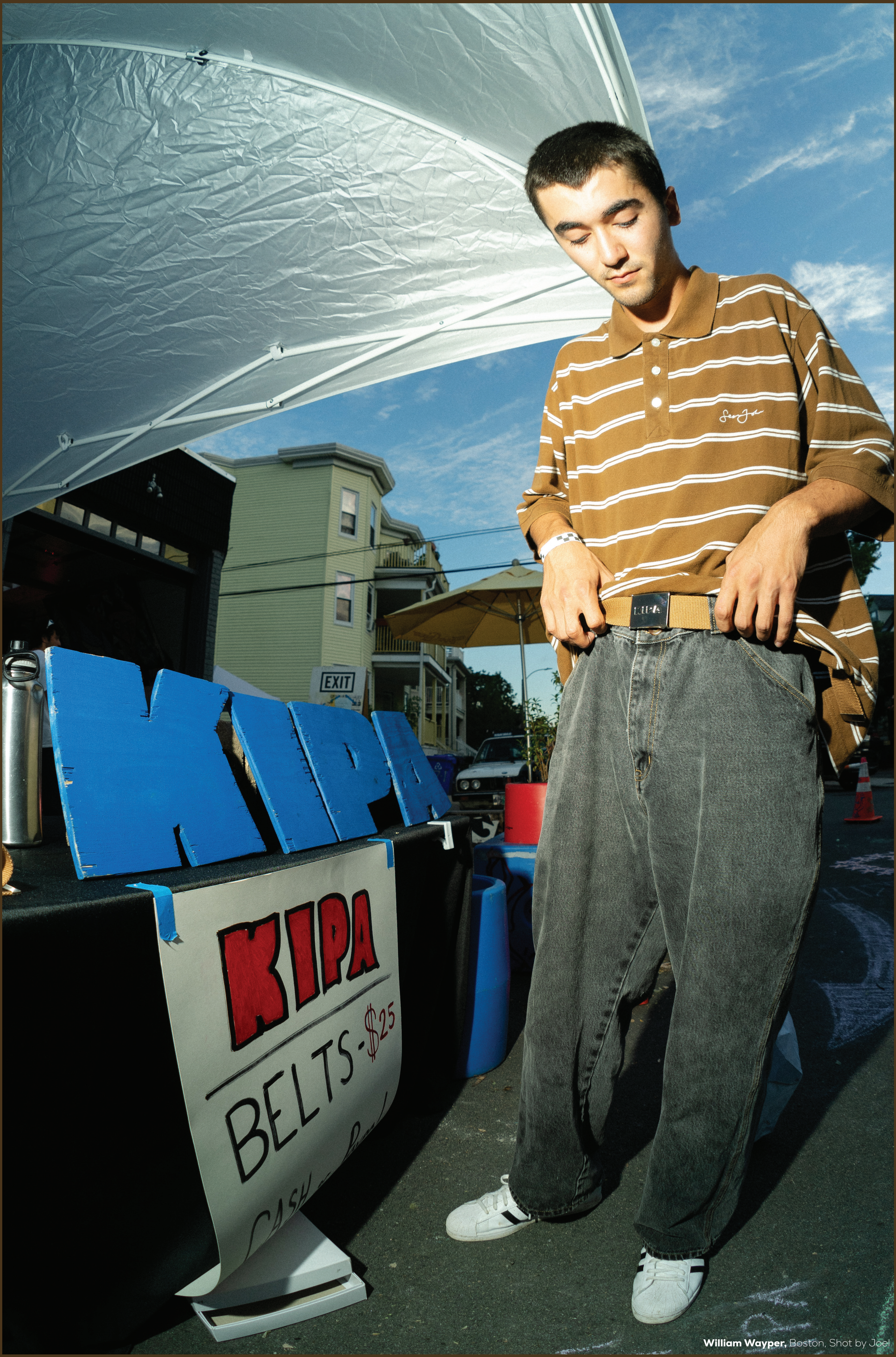
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William Wayper, Boston, Shot by Joel

The Commons

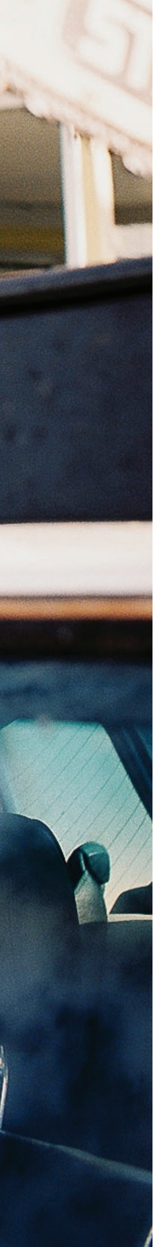
"Every October, athletes from across the U.S. flock to Boston, Massachusetts for the opportunity to train beneath the autumn foliage and sleep in a dirty garage at the largest parkour cultural celebration held on American soil. Now in its fifth year, "Join or Die" (JOD) is growing at a monstrous rate, and looks to be the largest yet. Alec Reduker and David Ehrlich of The Commons have spent years of trial and error - as well as nearly all of their time, money, and sanity - cultivating a phenomenon of grassroots organization that has cemented The Commons' role in North America as a force for inclusion and representation. As anyone who has attended Join or Die will know, spending time with Alec and David is always time well spent. The dynamic duo have a penchant for flair and witty repartee that illuminates their passion for the parkour community and thus draws athletes to Boston every year like moths to a fisherman's sweater."

Join or Die V

Written by
Jake Chapman
Photography by
Myles Ross

YAKIMA
Heineken

THERE ARE ALWAYS LITTLE
THINGS HAPPENING
JAZZ TONIGHT!
EXIT
LITTLE FREE RECORD SHOP
SPIFF



Me: Join or Die has become an institution among parkour jams. What do you think sets it apart from other events?

Alec: One thing that works to our benefit is that we aren't afraid to experiment. We've done a lot of things that didn't really work out, but we always take things away from the experience, and this year isn't going to be any different. We're doing new stuff again this year, and we've had success without any two years being similar. I also like to think we generally have a very inclusive vibe.

David: I have been to a lot of events in my years of training. I've been to 4 The Love of Movement, attended and now help run Hubbable, I've seen a lot of events. I feel like Join or Die has cultivated a special hominess and togetherness. You know that thing at jams where everyone splits into pocket cliques and goes to train other places? That doesn't seem as common at our event. It was especially evident during JOD 4 where people showed up to literally build the spot. Everyone had hands on the site either carrying something, building something, helping me in the kitchen, everyone was in.

Me: You mentioned things that didn't work, what are some examples?

Alec: I'm not sure if we ever really had anything that outright didn't work, but there have been aspects that didn't run smoothly or as expected.

David: Well we can't just brag the whole time. *Laughs*

Alec: We have had some trials and tribulations with film screenings. We started with doing them at Hub in the gym, then we tried doing them in our back yard and it was cold as fuck in October. Last year we finally got the film screening into a movie theater but we sold out really quickly: there were like 30 people who showed up and couldn't get in. Film screenings have become a staple of the event, but it's taken some time to figure out. We're still getting better at curating the films, that sort of thing. This is the first year that we've considered rejecting film submissions, which is both good and bad.

David: The main reason for considering rejecting some videos is that the film screening at Hubbable lasted over three hours. We were so grateful that people wanted to be involved that we accepted every single project. A long screening like that can create some atrophy in the crowd, and it also makes it really difficult for Alec and I to do our hosting schtick.

Alec: Something we've also had to work on is delegating. We run events because we like to run events, so we tend to take on a lot more responsibility than we should. Practicing delegating made a big difference last year, and it's going to be key with our staff again this year.

Me: Who are you delegating to this year?

Alec: Is this shoutout time?

David: Shoutout to our staff—Connor Pennington, Noah Heath, Trystan Puckhaber, Sen Schwartz, Naomi Pearlman, Chris from Unknown Project, Yaron Erkin, Dylan Polin, Brian Horn, Zack Karro, Egg, Josh Dohy, Davis Vasconcellos, and the many others who will be helping out. Our staff is gonna come out to like 30 people. Every year it´s really surprising, people will just show up to help even if they aren't on staff.

Me: At least you have the staff for the festival you're throwing. What's the price point of tickets again?

Alec: I'm getting nervous actually. We've already sold 65 tickets, and we're two months out from the event. We just stopped selling early bird tickets which were $70, normal price tickets are $85, and VIP tickets are $115. The prices don't come from thin air, this kind of undertaking takes real money, and the bigger it gets the more money it takes. We have to have tables and chairs, all the materials for the parkour setup, we need a dumpster and a porta-potty. We do steal all of our pallets that we use, that we can freely admit. But just the other stuff I listed is easily two grand. Flying people out to attend costs even more. We do most of the work ourselves and it still costs us nearly $10,000.

Me: Do you guys come close to breaking even with ticket sales?

David: We had a profit of $4 last year!

Alec: Yeah, we were just barely in the green. I'm pretty confident that we are going to break even this year. Any money we make, if we make any, will just end up in the budget for future projects and events.

David: With extra money we'll likely just try and give more to the people who do an awesome job working on the jam, and paying filmmakers, editors, writers, etc. At this stage of parkour, there are two very distinct experiences: You can go to a jam, or you can go to an event. If you're going to a jam, you're going to a spot or two, it's loosely organized, someone threw a story on Instagram or something, and everyone trains together. When you attend an event, you're there for multiple days in a row, there are organized things to do, there are things and people there you cannot experience at a casual training session. Alec wants to make a 40 ft. geodesic dome over the house with dangling chainsaws, like these are things you can't experience at your local jam.

Alec: Here's a hot take. I think the only reason to build a parkour setup is to build something that isn't easily found or replicated outside. David had to talk me down this year from getting an excavator and hanging a rope swing from it. For me, the setup is about aesthetics over everything. I don't really care if what I build is trainable or not, I want it to be unique and memorable. And David…

David: I want to be able to activate the space and get as many people training as possible.

Alec: David wants to actually do parkour. *Laughs*

David: And Alec wants to live his dream of setting something on fire as someone trains on it.

Alec: Or setting someone on fire while they train…

Me: So David is the practical one. You said that you were bringing in something new this year. What do you do to keep JOD unique?

Alec: I have a vibe that I want to create. I want to have a farmer's market vibe. The first day there will still be a setup and people can train and stuff, but I want to have a big bazaar, like a block party on the street outside our house. We're gonna have a bunch of vendors from the community selling stuff, David's going to be cooking, and there will be a small concert as well. We want to get foot traffic that isn't just parkour people. We want people to be able to just walk through and buy things.

David: We're also doing something a little bit different that night, we're going to have some little discussion circle-type talks, which sounds really nerdy. But I had a really positive experience at 4TLOM in 2015, where after training had ended for the day, we had a presentation time, where someone would speak on a couple of topics that were really important to them, and had great takeaways for the parkour community, and I really enjoyed that. It was a great way to bring down the energy of the day and leave people discussing their thoughts. One of our key speakers is going to be Egg, speaking on mental health and some other topics. We've talked about doing some more talks on more subjects with some practical takeaways, but we'll see what materializes. I'm really excited about this idea though, because I think people will get really engaged in the topics. Wait—we forgot to tell you about the Wheel of Death!

Me: Oh God, what's the Wheel of Death?

Alec: Part of our VIP ticket is a free spin of the "Wheel of Death," which has some merch on it, some perks, some silly things, some chores, and some disastrous things as well.

David: We've toyed around with making one of the prizes a five-minute roasting from Davis Vasconcellos, followed by five minutes of Josh Dohy gassing you up, or maybe having to stare into Joel Larsson's eyes for a full minute of his unblinking intimidation. *Raucous Laughter*

Me: Honestly, Joel is one of the nicest guys in the world, but he has an intimidating presence for sure. How do the challenges of hosting JOD change with your growing experience?

Alec: I touched on this briefly, but for me, delegating has always been the hardest part. We are hosting because we love hosting, we were hosting events long before any of the media stuff we've been doing. I constantly want to do more and last year was too much.

David: He performed in the band, made most of the media for the event, built the setup, designed all of the merch, made a video for the screening which was one of the most beautiful Boston parkour edits this world has ever seen. Alec wore so many different hats! For me personally, I think the most challenging part of hosting this year is making sure that people traveling have a place to stay. A lot of people forget that hosting a jam involves helping accommodate the people who want to attend, and if your city doesn't have the infrastructure for people to easily visit and find housing, then you can't host a major event. Housing is a problem, and just saying to your attendees, "figure it out", creates more hardship for people's wallets and their ability to navigate a city they've never been before. At this point, based on ticket sales alone, we don't know 60-80% of the people coming, and we can assume a lot of them haven't ever been to Boston before. They don't know where to go or where to stay, so giving them that option has made our event much more accessible. We've put 30+ people in our home, and had people camping in the yard on top of those.

Alec: Knowing the parkour community, there are going to be a lot of people who don't want to make a "commons.boston" account and buy a ticket ahead of time. They'll just drive here and show up to train, and that number of people could be huge this year. Could be massive.

David: Part of hosting that many people is understanding that your space is being invaded, and people are messy. So I like to give a monologue of "Unfuck My House". I'll gather everyone in the living room and spilling

out into the hallways, and I'll say: "My house is fucked, please unfuck my house." Then everyone works together to return our house to a state of decency. We have non-parkour people who live here as well, and so that always creates some tension around the time Join or Die ramps up, but our houseguests have been pretty respectful and we've never had any issues.

Me: Looking back at four events now, is there a moment that stands out as peak Join or Die energy?

Alec: Can I list a few before you do your wholesome spiel?

David: Why of course.

Alec: So we had the rat bounty last year, where Ezra Schroer won $200 for catching a rat bare-handed. There have been a couple of big NBD's at every Join or Die. The film screenings, as well, because those usually allow the opportunity to celebrate the event and celebrate the other people who helped us. We give out our awards, and it gets pretty emotional.

David: We love a good production. Also, last year during the concert when the police showed up.

Alec: The police showed up while everyone was moshing to the last song in the show, and everyone just kept going. It was amazing.

David: Wholesome bullshit time?

Alec: Go ahead…

David: There we go! So at JOD2 during the skill comp, the purpose of the skill comp was fulfilled. It was like 30 people all facing a single challenge - this weird Jackie Chan style tic-tac - and so many people were working through it together, and discussing the challenge. It was so wholesome and perfect, and it's the reason why I'll make sure to host a skill comp every year: to get people to activate in training and wanting to do stuff. Then last year during Tam's workshop, she was anticipating like five or six people would attend her workshop on the last day of the jam, and then she ended up in a crowd of like 50 people and had a moment of flabbergasted joy at having to teach all of those athletes. Everyone came together and reignited the final day of the jam and it was such a wonderful sight.

Me: This is the largest international representation that JOD has ever seen. How does it feel to have your event valued on a worldwide scale, and who are you most excited to see train your spots?

David: It hasn't really set in for me yet, but I think the end of the jam will say a lot, especially if we have people from Europe who weren't specifically flown out here, who come to train. I think people are starting to recognize that we are - dare I say - a force for the community, and the impact we're trying to make. I can almost guarantee that people will know us by the end of next year, when we go to Mexico City to help host the next iteration of Discourse Jam.

Alec: As far as people we're excited to see train, Joel Larsson has always been one of my favorite athletes to watch. I'm also really excited to watch Elise train.

David: I'm really stoked to see the Avanti Garda guys, and I know Egg is from the U.S. but I'm always so impressed by the way they move. Also, Chris Roff. I know we're talking internationals, but those two are just so much fun to watch. I'm just really jazzed.

Me: How do your spot needs change as your attendance continues to grow?

Alec: Boston is blessed with a collection of good jam spots. We try to mix it up every year, but we get less and less freedom as the jam gets bigger. There's a lot that people don't think about when they think about spots for a jam. The spot being good isn't good enough. It has to have transportation and food around it, bathrooms and parking nearby, just things that make a spot conducive to a larger crowd. We would love to find new spots, but part of the beauty of returning to spots is that people from out of town always have incomplete challenges, and people really enjoy seeing some of the spots they haven't had access to in a year. Boston has some really memorable and iconic locations. We're really lucky! We've also started making spot mod a big part of our jam. So we train on our back yard setup on Friday, then on Saturday we get a Uhaul and bring all of it to the spot, and we recruit people to move and build right there at the spot. We even had a spot mod street comp last year.

David: It's definitely a spectacle when you roll up in a 40 ft. box truck, open up the back, and obstacles just come pouring out. Another aspect of spot choice at an event is finding a spot where everyone won't just leave the space. Like people can all train their intricate niche of parkour that they enjoy, at one spot, instead of breaking off from one another over the course of a city block.

Alec: Another part of that is food. We're offering as much food as we can this year because we don't want people to have to leave to go eat. The expense is worked into ticket pricing and everything.

David: We want people to arrive and feel like they live at the jam for three days.

Me: This is your fifth jam now, how do you see yourselves growing in the next five?

Alec: I actually think that a jam can get too big. I don't want to lose the vibe that we've created here, and I would like to host other events in other locations and get more involved elsewhere. Maybe Join or Die turns into that, maybe not, but I think it's important that we have this close-knitted community experience. I think that a lot of groups get to a place that we're approaching, where we have the experience and resources to step back and be less involved and let the brand do the work, and we don't want to do that. We're doing this because we love it. We like having the vibe of Join or Die the way it is. I would love to do a bigger festival event in the future, build whatever crazy multi-story movement structures on our own property, etc. But I also want to keep doing what we're doing. I want to do both, and I don't want JOD to get so big that it becomes impersonal.

David: We've done some "consulting" gigs with some other event organizers, and to be those people with the expertise to help others build an event in their own communities has been so rewarding. We've discussed hosting satellite jams, basically communicating with a local community, showing up a few weeks beforehand to find spots and build a spot mod setup, and then throw an event. It would be amazing to be able to step into other smaller communities and help to build something.

"Rose that Grew from Concrete"

Philly Community Spotlight

Written by
Jake Chapman
Photography by
Sal Gaetano

“Philadelphia has built a reputation for groundbreaking movement across the spectrum of environment exploration practices. Parkour athletes in the City of Brotherly Love shoulder this legacy proudly, relentlessly committing to colossal challenges and applying practical experimentation that astonishes with its technicality. The Philadelphia community exerts influence over the whole scope of U.S. parkour, and only recently began to develop the following it so rightly deserves. Speaking with some of the Philly community’s most prolific characters, Chris Roff, Liam McKay, E, Marquis Bennett, and Ritto, we get into the culture shock of training parkour in inner city America, broadening one’s horizons and building a supportive culture.”

OLiToki
FUSION

> “Tracking down the guys proved to be difficult, as it was the day before Philly Nat Jam, and they were all scrambling to get adult life out of the way so that they could give every ounce of themselves to the event.”

Me: What makes Philadelphia special in terms of parkour?

Ritto: We’re just different. We come from so many different backgrounds and it plays into our ways of thinking, our movement and how we interact with each other. It creates this energy that’s just different.

Chris: You have to move differently in the city, like you have to be aware, be on your toes. People go crazy in Philly and you have to be prepared for that.

E: Just this morning I had to dodge this kid who’s been trying to fight me, he was waiting outside of my house and I had to do some bobbing and weaving to get to my car. That’s one way you need to move differently in the city. That makes parkour feel safe, because all of the danger is in my control. I’m not having to put my faith in the unstable people in my day to day life. The variables in parkour are much more stable.

Liam: Personally, I think it’s the grit of the community. We’re a community that can take a hit and keep moving. We’ve incurred a lot of loss and continued to function, grow and thrive. Philly has become a breeding ground for nasty-creative athletes like E, Chris, Ritto, and Marquis.

Me: What hits has the community had to endure?

Liam: We’ve lost three parkour gyms over the last seven years or so. The flagship gym in Philly - Pinnacle Parkour - was a tremendous asset to the community. It really helped to skyrocket the training of the athletes who were already here, brought in fresh legs and it really shaped our culture. It was a huge blow to lose Pinnacle because the community was really fractured.

Me: What does the community look like now that it’s been regulated to outdoor training?

Liam: As helpful as a gym environment can be, I think that the community has grown in ways that it otherwise wouldn’t have. People have had to develop their skills in a less forgiving environment.

E: Something that I’ve seen in other cities is a distinct separation between gym and outdoor communities. Once we lost the gym, that separation disappeared for us. You either trained outside or you quit doing parkour. Losing the gym gave our community a bit of unity in that way. We have one big unified community. And one thing about training outside in Philly, is that our spots can be gnarly sometimes. When you train at a lot of our spots, you can be exposed to parts of the city you might not normally go on your own, especially if you aren’t used to rough urban conditions, and that can be a catalyst for self reflection and growth.

Me: What is the best part of living and training in Philly?

Liam: I would say that the spot diversity in Philadelphia is extremely helpful, because it’s shaped people to move in ways that you don’t see in other American communities. We have a lot of weird areas filled with pocket spots, and they’re all very different and promote very different ways of training. I would also argue that one of the things that makes Philly special for training is the community itself. Like E was saying, our community has become very unified over time. I think that we have a group of people who are really rooting for each other, and want to watch each other grow.

E: One of my favorite things is having access to a diverse pool of athletes. We all come from different backgrounds, and want different things out of movement, but we find common ground really easily.

Me: What is an essential experience to training in Philadelphia?

Ritto: There’s always something over-the-top-extra going on at the spots, and the way you deal with that is your experience in Philadelphia. There’s a lot of right place wrong time/wrong place right time.

E: Gunshots and syringes.

Liam: E’s not wrong. Just being at a spot and coming across tons of hypodermic needles.

E: One of my favorite spots is called “Municipal”, and I just had an interesting experience there with Noah Heath and we were jailed, hahaha. That spot has gone through multiple phases. When I started training it was a popular spot for street people to hang out and smoke spice. So you’d have people zombied out on the spot, and it’s like, “I guess I have to go over them if I want to do this jump.”

Liam: Losing Municipal Plaza right now is rough. It’s also called “Game Pieces”, and it was an iconic skate spot as well. It was part of this trifecta of plazas which were legendary in skateboarding, all of which have been demolished and replaced by flat city parks.

Me: Obviously Philadelphia’s skating history is tremendous. Has Philly’s legacy of impressive skating feats affected parkour in the city?

Liam: I definitely believe that there has been an influence on the community, in the way that we look at challenges and the way that we view other movement practices. There’s definitely an attitude thing as well, like, “Fuck the police, we’re gonna do what we need to do.” And it adds to the gritty nature of where our community comes from, and the spots themselves. We are constantly mistaken for skateboarders, and so we get very angry reactions from a lot of people who assume we’re raising hell or breaking things. I know that’s not uncommon, but I’ve been told that it’s more significant here, that the cops are a little more aggressive in how they approach, and the constant thought that we’re there to cause problems. But skating has definitely influenced how people dress, the movement being done, and the progression of that off-axis movement that we’re seeing more of.

Chris: That’s a fucking question. I think for me, skating was my introduction to how to look for spots. My brothers were big skaters for a while, and I would go out with them to film their tricks, and that opened my eyes to how differently you could use just one object. I really loved going to Love Park, one in the trifecta of huge skateboarding plazas, and that’s one of the first spots in the city where I started training parkour.

E: Plaza skate culture is really interesting, because it’s like there’s one spot where everyone congregates, and it creates an interesting social environment that people cling to. It leads to people clinging to old spots that don’t even exist anymore. I saw people skating on what’s left of Municipal the other day, and it’s literally a bit of tile and a ledge, but they’re still there. Our parkour community is like that, too. We have spots that we just cling to for dear life. Not to mention the culture of slams in skating. Like when you skate it’s fucking violent and people get thrown. In skating that’s cool and that bleeds into parkour a little bit here. Just because parkour at large is kind of sus about getting obliterated by concrete, doesn’t mean we care. We know it’s cool in our personal culture, and we applaud that.

Me: What did the local community look like when you each started, and how has it changed?

Chris: Twelve years ago, Liam and I started on the same day. At that point, there were two people teaching parkour. They taught me a backflip, and then a couple of years later it became a group of 10 people who called themselves "Team Pariah". That slowly devolved into the groups of athletes who still meet up and train today.

Marquis: My introduction was later than these guys, but I attended "Pinnacle Parkour", and everyone I knew in the community revolved around that space. The gym was crucial to being part of the community, it was a hub, especially as someone just learning. If it wasn't for that space, I wouldn't have the foundations that I do now, and I wouldn't know all of these guys. Now, I prefer training outside, but in terms of introduction to the community, the gym was essential.

Ritto: If you know of Andy Taylor, he's like Jariah from Naruto of Philadelphia parkour. He's a pervy old sage. "Corrupted morals but never cursed" type of old man. He was a really good coach, and he was really hard on kids, hard on everybody. He was the coach that would yell and make fun of you, but I got a lot out of that. One good thing that he did was spearhead community training at the time. If it wasn't for Andy, nobody in this interview would move the way that they do.

Liam: When I first started, things were pretty fractured. There were people who planned jams, but there was no one that anybody would look to consistently to set up training and regular communication. We've now got this massive group chat that we use. One of the bigger changes I'm seeing is that people are consistently coming out to train every week because they see the progress of their style and mental barriers alongside the growth of the community itself.

Me: How important is it to each of you to see the Philly community grow and prosper? How do you foster that growth?

Marquis: We have so many people that care about parkour here, and so many other disciplines, as well. I expect to still see parkour in the city in 10-15 years. We've been preparing for "Philly Nat Jam", which is going to help bring people in and continue to help us grow. Then, we also do fall and spring events, along with weekly sessions.

Liam: The Philly community is a second family to me. When I started parkour, the people in the community made me feel seen and valued and those things have stuck with me for a very long time. I want to create the space for others that was created for me. A lot of the things being done here are directly influenced by how kind people were to me on my training journey. We had no consistent training happening, so I started weekly sessions where everyone is welcome. My core value is creating a space where everyone feels welcome.

Me: There's so much to be said for that mentality. East Coast PK communities are much closer geographically than any other region in the US. Do you find that this proximity to other communities has an effect on your local practice, why or why not?

E: I think having access to other communities definitely has an effect on our style. To the point that we've been trying to travel to and train with every U.S. community that's pushing shit, just for the sake of exposing ourselves to different perspectives. We've been trying to meet everyone.

Liam: We're two hours from DC, two and a half hours from New York, five hours from Boston, Baltimore is pretty close, so we've had a lot of exposure to a lot of different communities. For a long time, we had athletes coming through and sleeping at the gyms and coming to our events. New Yorkers would come down and do massive power challenges that influenced us to hit more of the same, and really technical athletes like Frank Mejia would come from Washington DC. And you can see the influence that all of these styles had on Philly parkour culture. People are hitting massive impactful jumps and weird, funky stuff in the same breath.

Me: There's obviously been a community presence in Philly for over 14 years, and seriously talented athletes, yet there are many who weren't aware of parkour in Philadelphia. Why do you think awareness was so low until recent years?

Liam: One of the things that kept us from being well known is social media. A lot of the guys from the early stages of our community didn't use social media, and so they've been underground for a long time.

Marquis: I think we're traveling more than any other generation of Philly athletes. It's hard to bring awareness to your community if you're just playing the Instagram game, you know? Parkour is so small, it's important to meet people in person. Going to events and training with people is how you make the connections in our community.

Chris: Whenever we're at an event, everybody calls us Philly Boys. We bring Philly with us.

Ritto: With us you can put a place to a face.

Me: What is the reputation that you guys want to build for Philadelphia as a parkour culture destination?

Liam: Speaking for myself and some of the community organizers: We want to push a culture of exploration, creativity, and acceptance. Allowing people to come in and explore what they want to do without feeling like they have to adhere to any specific style. No one is wrong for exploring something unconventional. It's about creating a space where people are excited to show up.

Ritto: I want everyone to feel openly invited to come here and to expect the unexpected. Philly's got a reputation as a gritty place, and you can't ignore the hard shit that goes on here. I want it to be recognized for what it is, the rose that grew from the concrete.

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Joshua Chen Cavalier

"Unbroken"

In parkour vernacular, to say a challenge is unbroken is to say that it is incomplete. One could describe parkour as the act of finding challenges in the world where there previously existed none. Two walls become conjoined by the space between them, rather than discrete points. A rail is repurposed as a bridge.

An unbroken challenge is a bridge that has not been traversed, two elect points in space not yet crossed, a task unfinished. The process of its resolution — of overcoming the physical and mental barriers presented — is called "breaking" the jump. As the name suggests, this is a demanding task, at times leviathan, requiring as indomitable a spirit as an indomitable body. When one or neither of these prove up to the task, the challenge parries the strain back onto its challenger. A broken athlete, like a broken challenge, is said to be defeated.

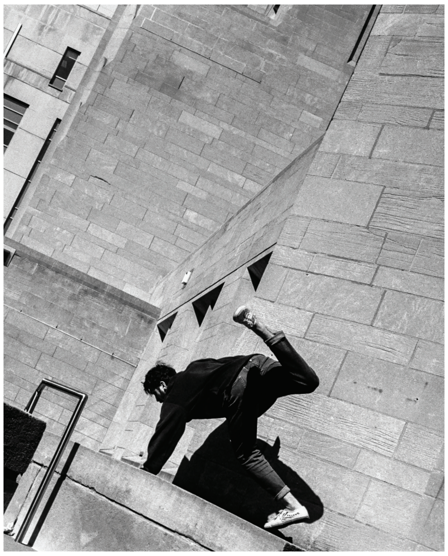
Consider a leap across a gap of some 15 feet/ 4.75 meters. The task, even for a seasoned athlete, might require time to process its demand, considerable effort and energy for its execution — especially if the surfaces are unstable or slippery, or the weather is imposing with gusts of wind. Even then, once the leap is broken, it is common practice for the athlete to seek to re-invent the challenge into something greater. To seek to make the jump plyometrically instead of from a running start. To confront it in the rain. To meet it in years' time. To defeat it still with the gradual pains and aches of age and degradation. To meet it in times of great distress, after the ending of a marriage, after the passing of a loved one.

This leap will be broken again. It will die and be remolded once more. To be broken is a form of death. And make no mistake, all things will be broken. All leaps will be crossed. You and I will be broken. You and I, perhaps tomorrow or in decades time, will cease to be. We will die. These challenges of our own invention will cease, the mosaic of our lives dissolved to dust and all things unbroken eventually broken. Here lies both the assurance and the paranoia, to be burdened by the knowledge that this great challenge — this lifetime of immense and unrewarded hardship — will in one way or another fall to pieces; to know that any strength we have will one day be tested, beaten to its knees, taken beyond what is bearable, and — like boiling water taken to frozen glass — at its most critical moment be shattered.

And the question that is left, for anyone who has stopped to watch the athlete at the precipice of the leap, and for the athlete themself in that most mortal, vulnerable moment — is this: why? Why meet these trials of our own invention? Why have grace? Why bother with dignity? What of culture and myth and courage in the face of the absurdity of our own suffering and mortality? Why strive to be unbroken, when all is inevitably broken?

I imagine each movement, each expression of the body — be it leap or vault or climb or traversal — not as any sort of answer to these questions, but as the questions in and of themselves.

A parkour practitioner shares the same lexicon of movement as any dancer, martial artist, athlete or locomotor. This vocabulary of acrobatics, though common, when arranged by the practitioner in their own manner — employing their variety of syntax, arrangement, and meter (just as any writer or poet might find their own elegy within the confines of a shared language) — will discover that they are capable of profound curiosity, that these reservoirs of yearning and compassion rhyme with those



of others. Though the spoken or written word might not always be up to the task of bridging that often vast chasm between self and other, perhaps the difference might be made up with locomotion.

The discipline of parkour finds its roots in the methods of indigenous peoples, for whom adept movement was essential to everyday life, and its value was assessed according to its utility and application. This utilitarian and martial character, while not as emphasized in many of the communities that practice parkour today, is still at the root of its expression. What many consider to be a well-performed line or combination of movements is deemed so by its perceived efficiency, urgency, and economy of motion — where utility and aesthetics find themselves in inextricable marriage. This is where the distinction is arguably made between play and training, though the parkour practitioner will regularly describe their practice in terms of the latter.

Although this is ultimately semantics, I think that the acceptance of the term “training” to describe our practice is important because it suggests a fundamental object of attention: a concrete goal, a circumstance to be prepared for, or — if only taken in an abstract sense — an ideal to aspire towards. The French expression “être et durer,” or “to be and to last,” encourages attention to the ephemeral present, as well as an awareness of the physical and mental demands that must be met for the athlete that is aiming towards longevity. In short, to be aware of both the present and our inevitable end.

After nearly fifteen years as both practitioner and observer, I have reason to believe that parkour’s genius is nowhere to be found in the farthest or most impressive leap, but in the act of mindfulness that it encourages; that is to find the brick dust crumbling at the glancing blow of your fingers, to revel in an afternoon sun and a chorus of like voices finding real joy in each others’ athletic triumphs, in listening to the lyric of fear and finding where it rhymes, and when confronted with misfortune to not shrink into self-pity, but to wear that misfortune and find where you can expand within its seams.

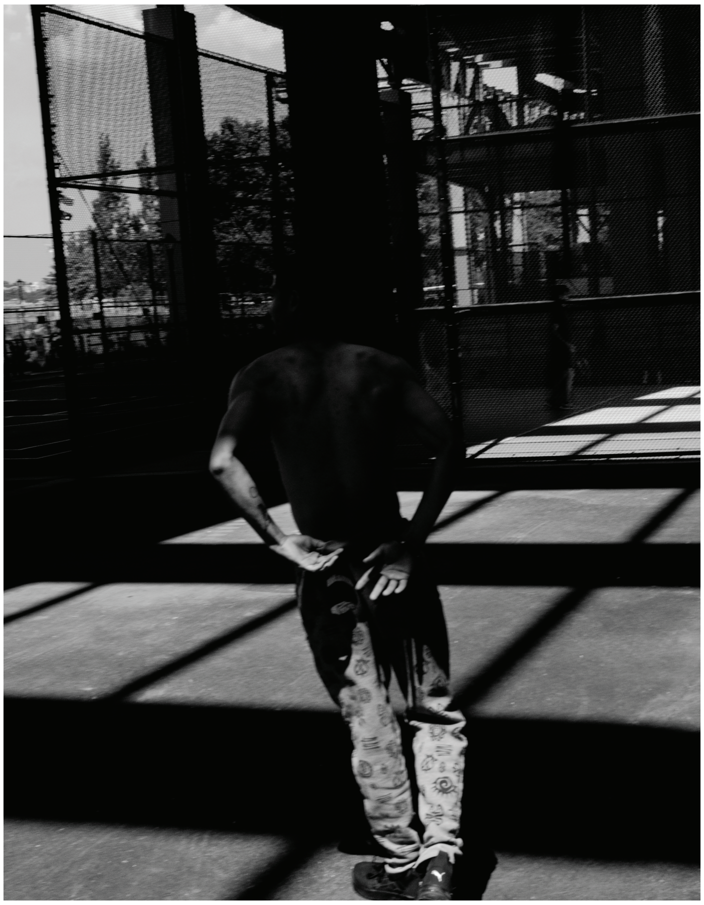
To claim that parkour is “the answer,” or even “an answer,” I think, is sorely misguided. I am wary when a doctrine or discipline claims to single-handedly lay the foundations for a better life, and I don’t believe that parkour in its present culture or philosophy suggests anything of the sort. Parkour, much like the objects that it trades with, is a tool — one uses it to barter with trying experiences in the hopes of emerging a better negotiator. There may be a degree of hubris that comes to the competent athlete (in any variety of athleticism) that because of their abilities and skills, they believe to possess something summarily unique, a superpower that makes them better than they were before (and in the narcissist, better than others); but this could not be further from the truth.

Parkour will render a more immediate experience of anything that occupies its practitioners mind. Everything from euphoria to pride to grief will be made more. Camus wrote, “Consciousness does not form the object of attention, it merely focuses.” Only the inexperienced will mistake parkour as an antidote to suffering, to self-hatred, or as evidence of their superior qualities. Movement is an action of attention; and attention does not displace, it heightens.

Our awareness of mortality, of the tragic, cannot be displaced, but only made less or made greater. Every bit of dust crumbles, and every voice and song tucked into the nape of memory will pass through the sieve of time and fall before Death, every friend and enemy to judge their disagreements with some degree of incredulity in the face of their forever demise. When something grand fades, be it a sunset or a life, the most significant act that a human can perform is the act of attention.

The word ‘human’ comes from the Latin word humando, which translates to “burying” or “to be buried.” To be human is to be forgotten, to eventually become food for the worms and fertilizer for the trees. We write our stories on pages that can be torn or burned or soaked through, expose images on negatives that will one day be blotched out by dirt and moisture, transcribe films onto hard drives that will fail, share videos on an internet that will collapse with its servers, and so on and so forth until even the very Earth falls at the mercy of a burning sun. Memory and beauty exist in the beholder, and so too they perish with the beholder. To know that the walls we move on will be ash is part of the dance — the chorus is beautiful because of the silence that bookends it. I think of the ancient Greek concept of eudaimonia, which contested that a good life could only be deemed so when reflected on at its terminus.

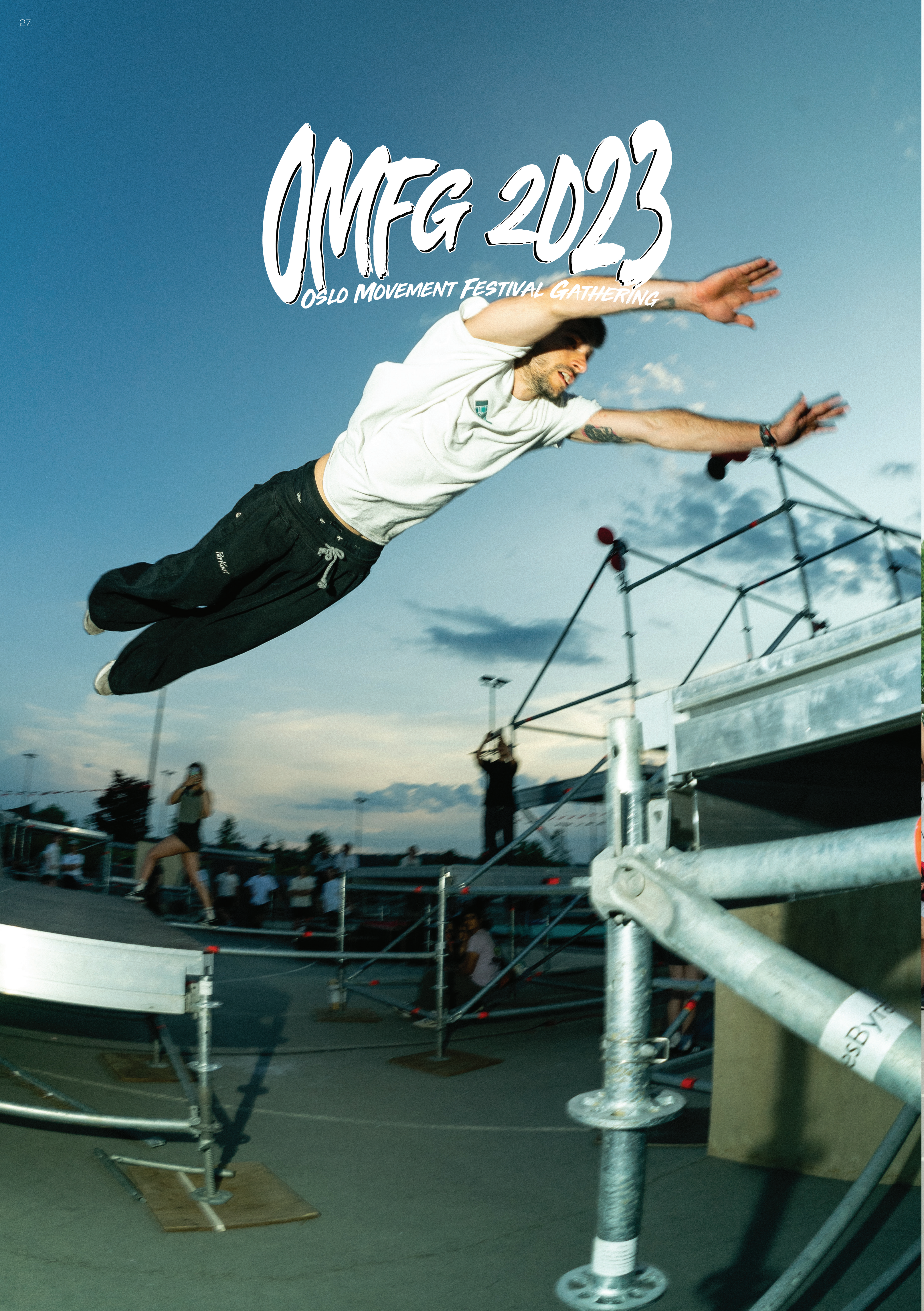
Here we have our contradiction: a movement cannot be said to have unbroken flow until it ends, a cantos made impossible to rhyme until it ceases, and a spirit cannot be said to have been unbroken until it itself is broken.



Don't touch
THE WALL

OMFG 2023

Oslo Movement Festival Gathering



Written by
Kevin Franzén
Photography
Joel Larsson

During the summer of 2023, two friends from Oslo, Norway hosted one of – if not the first ever parkour festival gathering, including multiple setups, live music, screenings, competitions, parkour shops, saunas, provided sleeping spots, and more. We spoke to one of the main organizers, Erik Cederberg from Oslo Movement, about how it all came together...

What's the origin of wanting to make a festival? Where did the idea come from? What was the goal and what is the goal now?

Ansell and I had a chat, I think right before the "OMG" event we held in 2022, about wanting to incorporate more things into our events. More things we liked to be exact. Since we both not only love movement, but also music and those sorts of events. We joked about bringing it all together and creating a festival with basically everything we liked. The goal both was and still is to create a festival where we can combine everything we like. The music we like, the artists we like and want to support, brands we like, movie screenings and so forth. We want to incorporate everything we can. Since we've held our events for a couple of years now, I feel like we've built a platform within our communities. We want to use that platform to lift others. It doesn't matter if it's athletes, brands, artists, stand-up comedians or whatever. The goal is to use our platform to lift others and create a space for everything we like at one location.

What goes into making "OMFG" a reality and how much does it differ from making an "OMG" event?

The "OMG" events are not very organized in comparison to the "OMFG" event. I've had to learn a lot of new things for "OMFG". Booking artists, or working closely together with the city for example. That's something we hadn't done before. For our previous events ("OMG") we just rented the gym. But now we have more people that we work with: Businesses, sponsors and especially the city. There's definitely a higher standard now and we need to take things more seriously than we've ever done before.

How long does it take to plan an event like this? When do you start working on it?

We started in June 2022, so like a year before. We started planning it bit by bit – the small things I guess. We got the dates from the city in August, so that was when we could confirm it and really start to book everything. For example, book the hotel, the camping place, the bar, and so on. I've basically been working for about 10 months locking down all the practical things bit by bit. Coming closer to the event, I realized that it was very, very necessary that we started that early. It really takes 10 months to be able to lock everything down, especially with running our gym and doing classes every day alongside it.

What are the ups and downs of making something like this?

Oh, there are a lot of ups. A lot of ups!
First of all, it becoming reality from being a dream. Yeah, being able to actually put it into reality and the feedback we received was amazing. And the event itself was super successful. So a lot of ups. I don't know, I guess the only down is the workload. It's been hectic, but understandably so. It wouldn't have happened otherwise.

When it comes to your mentality, where's the difference between when you're planning things and when they're being executed?

Good question. First of all, writing down ideas is pretty fun.
Going around everyday, thinking about festivals or different things that could be cool. Writing down those ideas and then looking into one or a couple ideas at a time to see if it's possible to do. To better see how to go about it I guess. For example, the same day I had the idea of involving standup, I sent a message to one of the local standup comedians in Oslo and asked if he would be interested. I think that is a good thing, just putting it out there. Putting it into reality very quickly.

During an event, these small "fires" can appear. How do you handle these incidents and do you stress about the planning not going as planned, or are you more loose about it? What are your thoughts about those things?

I try not to get too stressed out about it. You kind of have to. I mean, first of all, have a couple of backup plans for things that can go bad, as an example the weather.
But also when things do happen, try to make the best out of it without trying to stress or get upset that things didn't line up or go as planned. Surprisingly, most things luckily enough fall into place.

How did you get in contact with the city for approval and did they help you with funding?

We sent an email – a pretty formal e-mail – to the person in charge of culture and events in the city and then talked on the phone a couple of times. Brummedal, the town where we had the festival, is a pretty small town so I think they were really happy to have something big and international coming to them without them having to do a lot. There was no funding from their side. However, they had everything at the location running on a different schedule. Public toilet cleaning, park cleaning and those sort of things.They also made their websites more up to date in English and so on. Other than those practical things regarding the city itself, we kind of handled everything ourselves with no funding from them or anyone else. Everything is self-funded.

You guys announced "OMFG 2024" already. Whereabout in the process are you right now and what are your goals for next year?

We're just in the starting phase of the planning right now. July is the month Ansell and I have a bit of a vacation to calm down after the last event. But yeah, in August we will start piecing everything together. We already have a list of athletes that we want to invite and brands that we want to work with. We already know a couple of artists that we want to book and re-book. As for goals for next year, a lot of the same things but bigger. I think a lot of people who ended up not coming this year hopefully will come next year. We're aiming for at least 150 more people next year. Some great news is that the city actually got funding to build a permanent outdoor parkour park a couple of hundred meters from where we have the festival. So in addition to everything we had this year, we're also going to have a permanent outdoor park for the next edition of "OMFG".

Can you talk me through tackling the behemoth that this event is and how you and Ansell share that workload? Do you have weekly meetings? How do you go about doing this? I guess, you guys see each other at the gym?

Actually, no. Unfortunately, we teach in two separate gyms at the same time. I'm at one gym all the time and the other three guys from "Oslo Movement" are at the other one. So we actually don't see each other as often as we did before. We're planning little by little throughout the year, chatting a lot on messenger and sharing ideas: Could you look into this? Could you look into that? What do you think of this idea? Should we go for that? Just sharing ideas, seeing if things sound necessary or not. I think, that's a good question to ask yourself. Double-check if things are necessary or not. Other than that I do most of the administrative work. There are a lot of things that I do on my own regarding booking stuff, getting new equipment or attending meetings with the city. Those sorts of things.

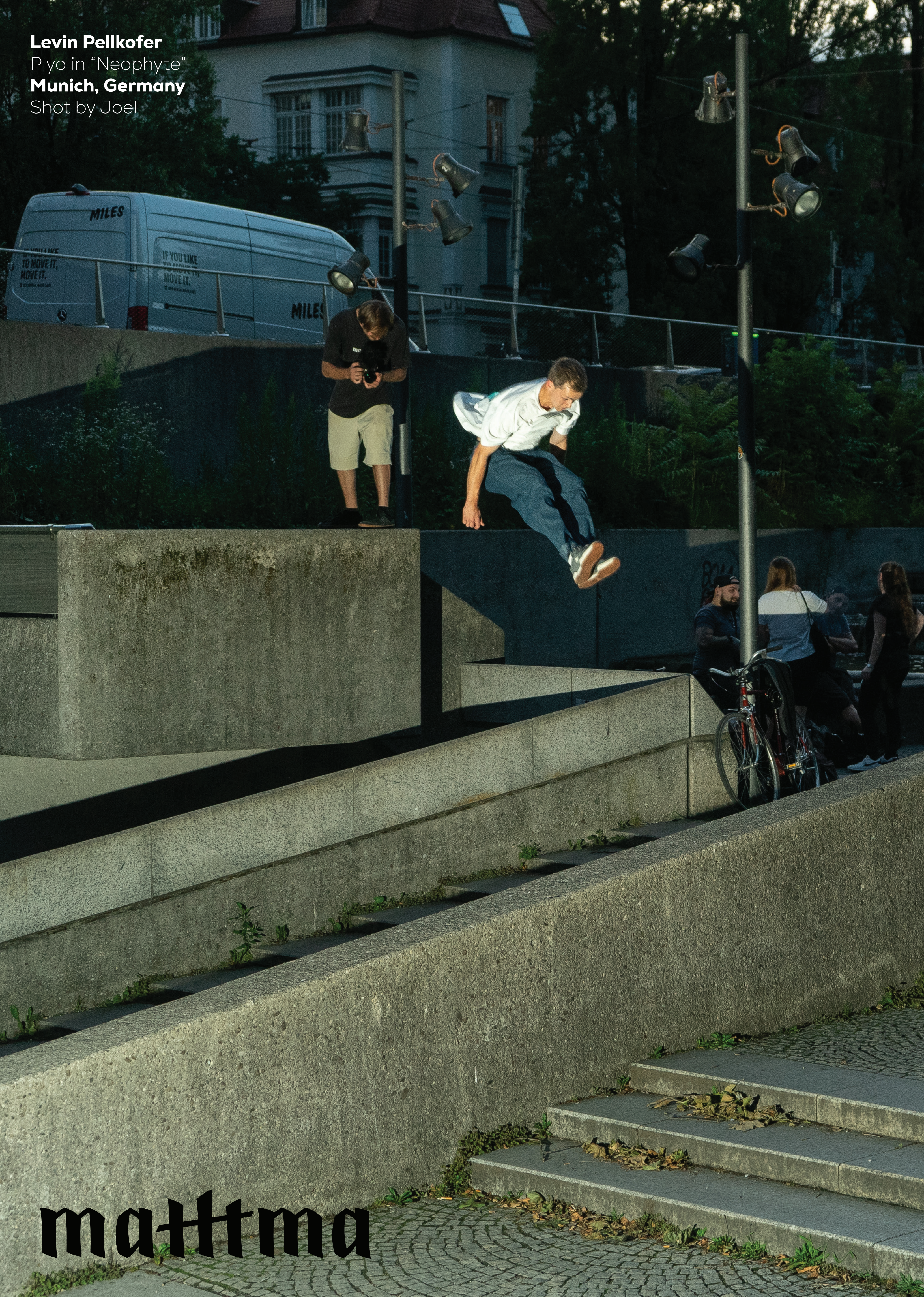
What would be your advice for anyone trying to create an event?

Well, we have a position that I think is very useful for hosting events. We teach classes. Doing that helps a lot because the classes kind of fund the event. If you want a good event, it's hard to make a profit, so teaching classes helps us a lot. If you just want to host events, I think it's going to be harder. Start small, I guess. Start small and invite a handful of interesting athletes that people want to train with or haven't trained with that much before. I think, that could be a good thing.

Is there anything you want to add?

You don't want to miss "OMG 2024"! It's the 12th to 16th of June, make sure to lock in the dates. Tickets go live January 1st.

PROPUD
EXEO



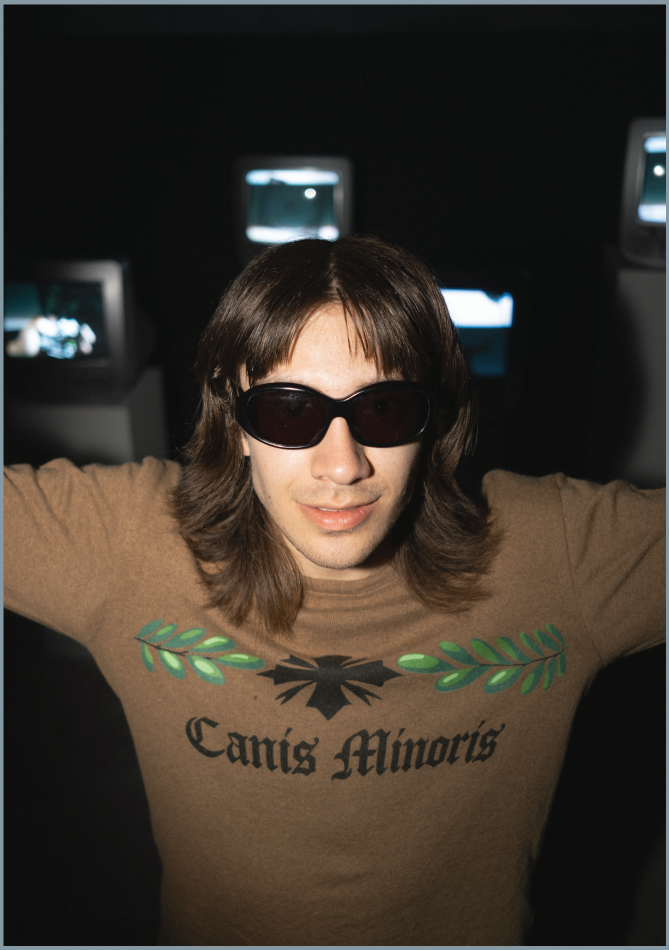
Levin Pellkofer
Plyo in “Neophyte”
Munich, Germany
Shot by Joel

MILES
IF YOU LIKE TO MOVE IT, MOVE IT.
MILES

mattma

Dave Alvar

22 years old from Amsterdam



Dave Alvar is a conceptual artist that calmly observes his environment and is driven by the things that tend to pass other people's eyes.

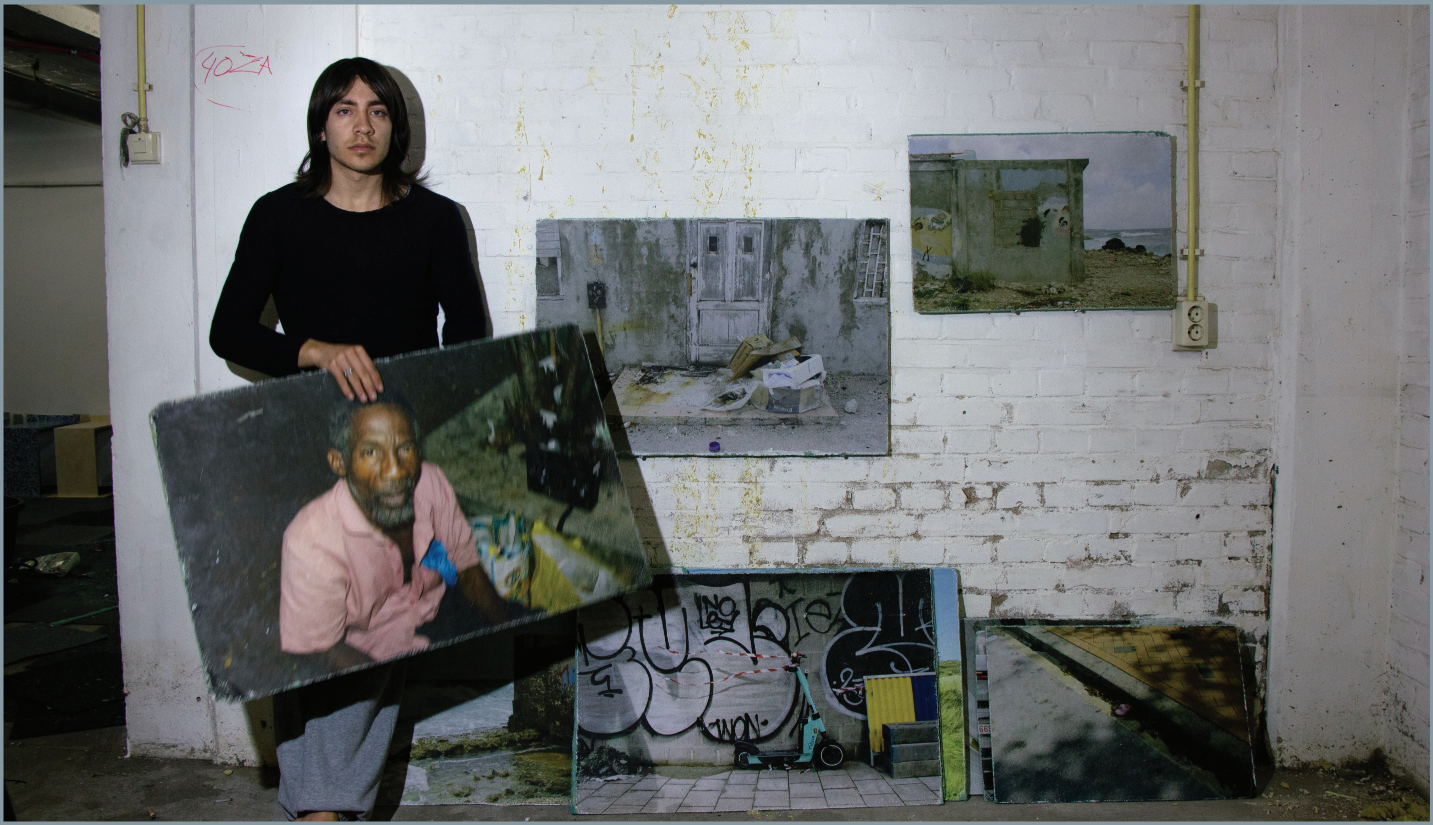
He never found a way to express his creativity until he started parkour in 2013, which undeniably affected his way of looking at the world around him. After training for over five years, he started to get injured more frequently, which limited his feeling of freedom within movement. This restriction naturally led to him exploring deviant artistic ambitions. Starting with analogue photography and studying Communication and Multimedia Design, mainly focusing on user experience and interaction design. He dropped out just before his last year to pursue more creative freedom. Shortly after dropping out of college, he conducted several exhibitions within a brief period and is now studying Product Design in an art school.

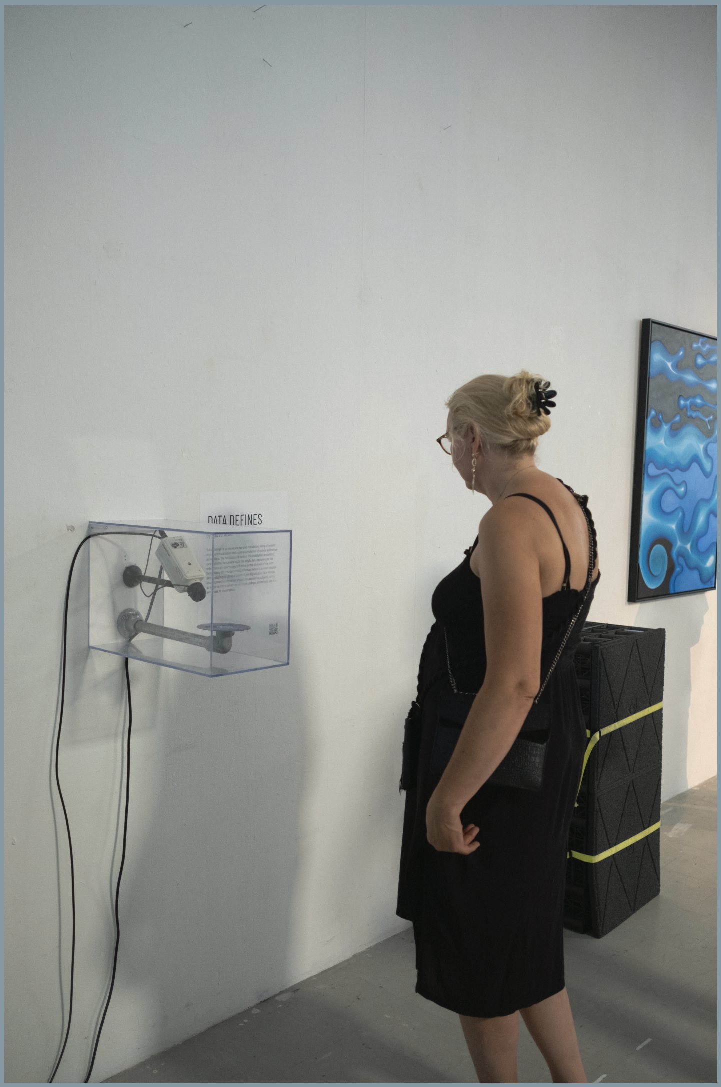
Dave tends towards a philosophical and observational approach to art and often takes on a mediating role in his work. He uses knowledge from working with different disciplines and media to create art with deep-rooted conceptual and contextual layers.

des-olate

Printed on wallpaper and glued on insulation boards saved from residual waste (2022)

This street photography series is shot in Curaçao, Brussels and Paris, capturing stories by shining a light on what is often looked down upon or given the cold shoulder. In which treatment similarities between people and objects are portrayed. Dave's compassion for neglected objects is not only evident in his photography but also in their presentation. The photographs are printed on material rescued from residual waste, deliberately distressed to mirror the emotional resonance he experienced while capturing these subjects.





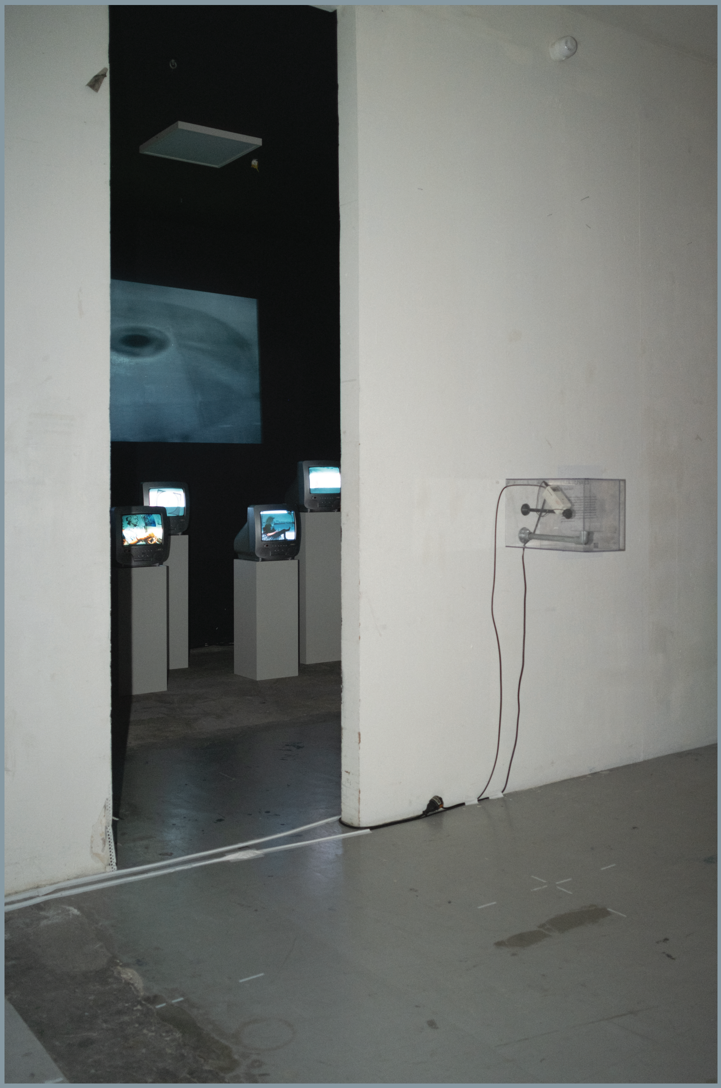
data defines

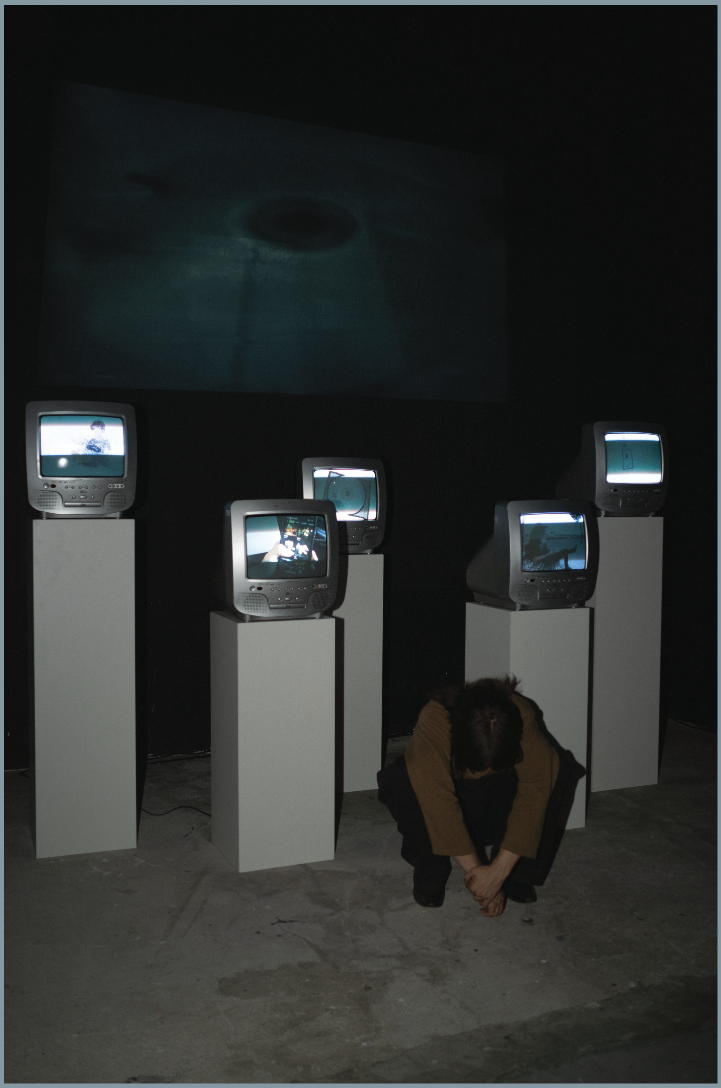
Surveillance camera, plexiglass, scaffolding tube and compact disk, with multimedia animations
on CRT televisions and live camera input projection (2023)

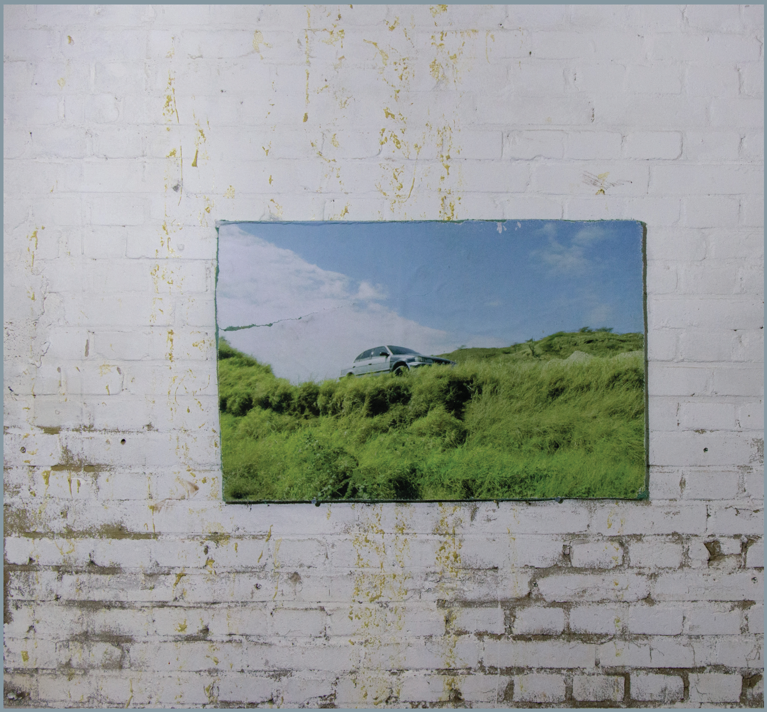
‘Data Defines’ is Dave’s most recent exhibition, about human data and behavior. This immersive installation is a visualization of data traffic in the current era of technological advancement, as part of the pre-party exhibition at Noir Worldwide.

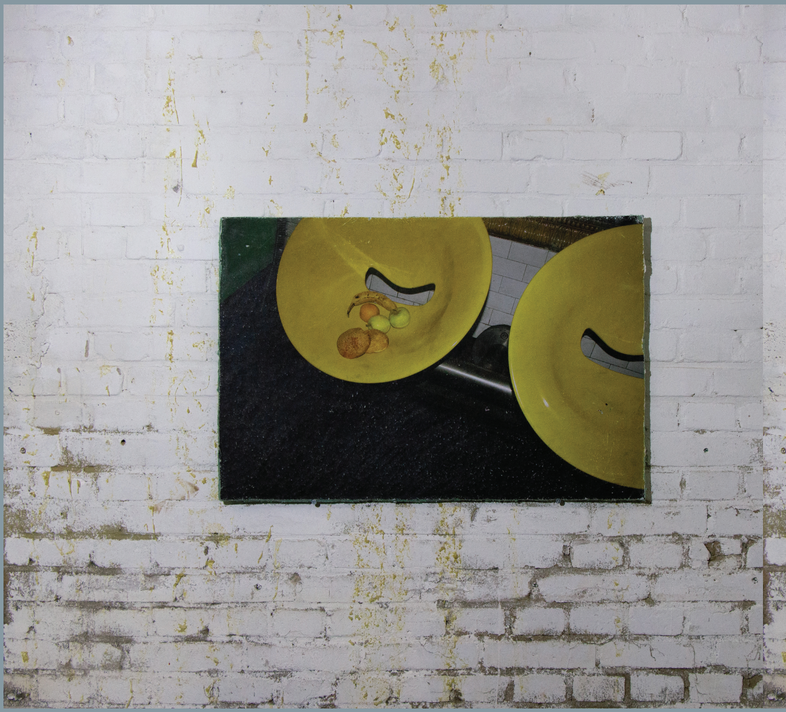
The two distanced parts of this installation are connected by a surveillance camera housed in an acrylic box. This device captures real-time reflections of visitors, projecting them onto the back wall of the room. This evokes interaction between the viewers and the work itself. Together with the multimedia animations, depicting contrary sides of related subjects. Acting as a hopeful lens through which viewers can contemplate recent shifts in data storage and its effect on oneself.

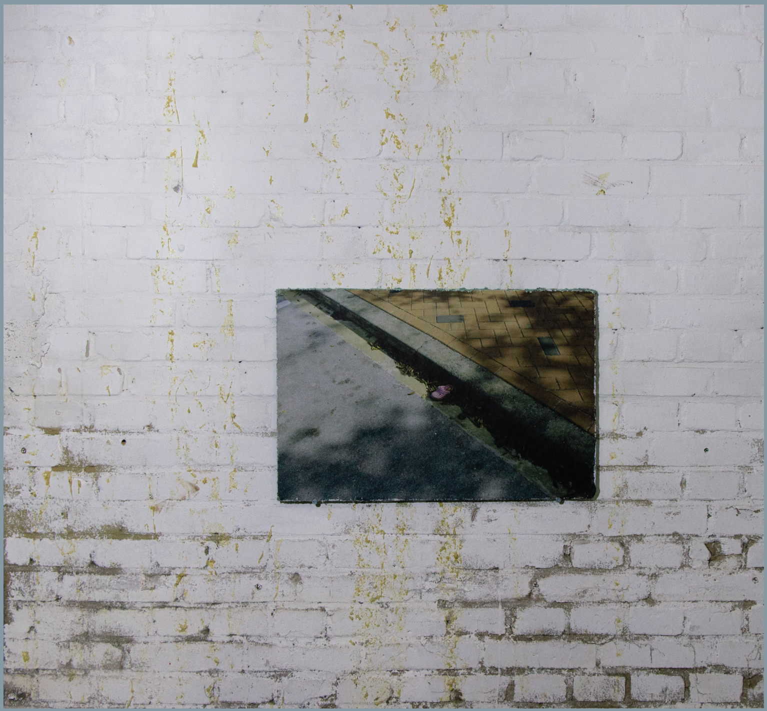
Together with the multimedia animations, depicting both sides of related subjects. In doing so, Dave aims to create awareness and opinion formation in a mediating manner. But only for the person who’s naturally interested in profound meaning behind his work. Simultaneously, he always strives to maintain a low-threshold in his art. He argues, that if looking for meaning or depth were a necessity to appreciate his work, it would be a flaw.

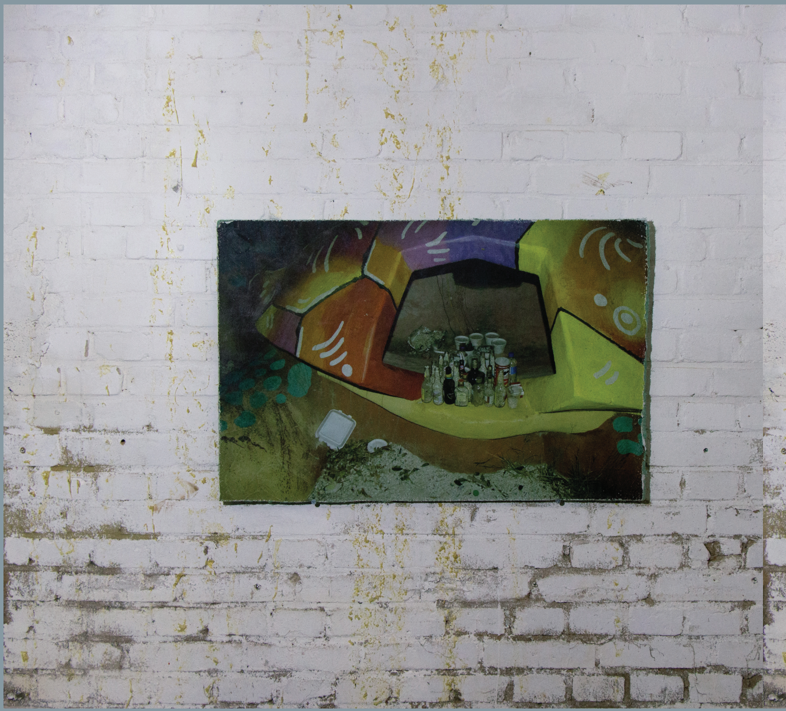


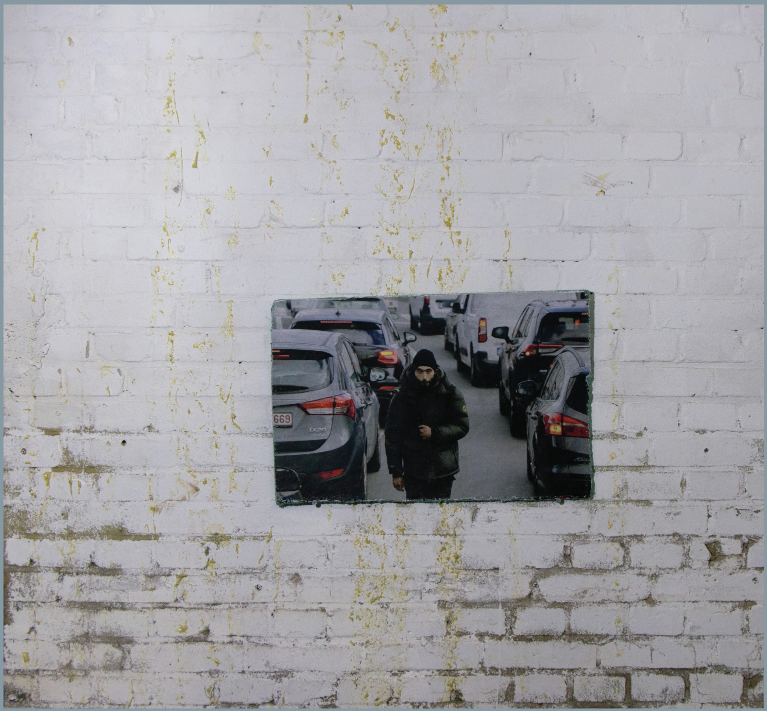


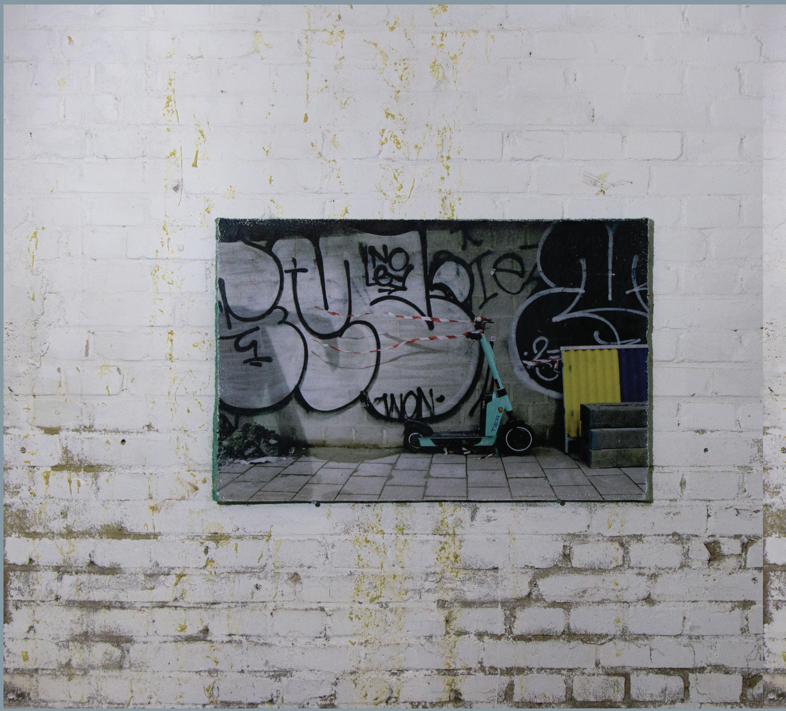


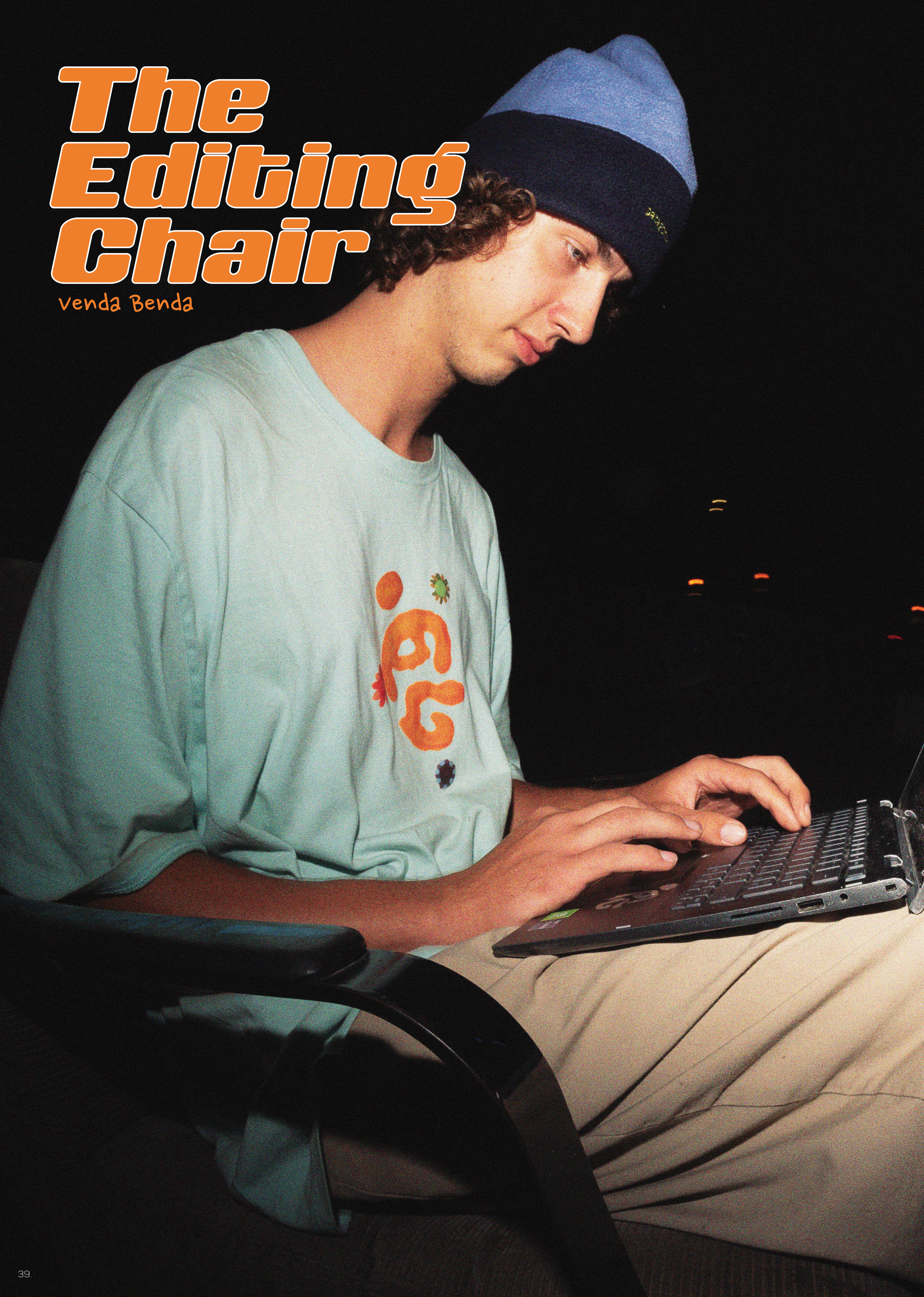






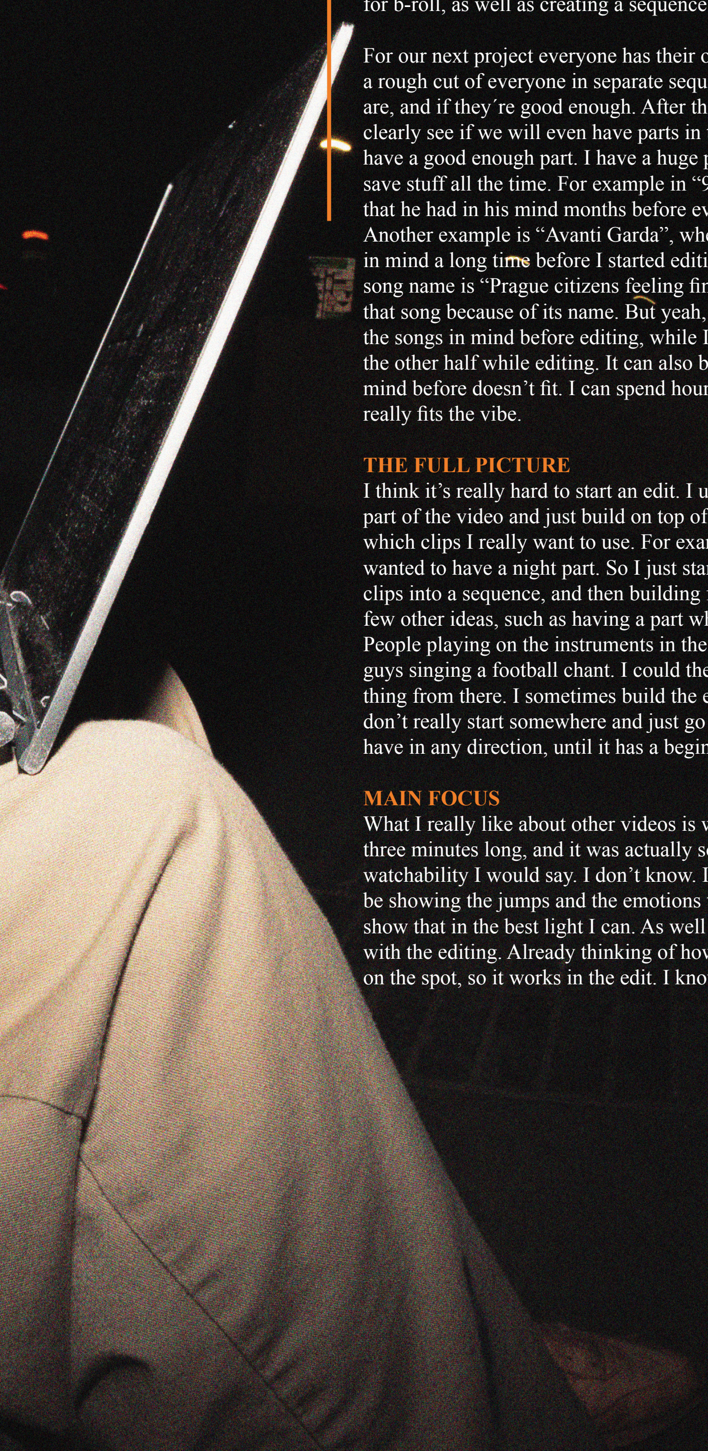






The Editing Chair

Venda Benda



BEFORE THE EDIT

“I think I have a pretty good visual memory, so I usually already have a rough idea of where I’m going to put clips into the edit once I start editing. I visualize a lot while filming. The first thing I do is sort all of the clips by cities, days, and afterwards divide b-roll and jumps from each other. Ever since we got two cameras, I also have to divide the clips by fisheye or long-lens.

STARTING THE EDIT

I edit with Premiere Pro. I would love to switch to DaVinci, but my laptop doesn’t really like it. I like to create loads of sequences. For example, while editing “Avanti Garda “ I made a huge sequence where I cut all the jumps how I wanted the clips after each other. Deciding when to use multiple angles, or using a b-roll clip as a build up for a jump. I pre-edit these things together. I also made sequences for b-roll, as well as creating a sequence only for night clips.

For our next project everyone has their own part. I will probably do a rough cut of everyone in separate sequences to see how long they are, and if they´re good enough. After the rough cuts I can more clearly see if we will even have parts in the end. I want everyone to have a good enough part. I have a huge playlist on Spotify where I save stuff all the time. For example in “9 to 5”, Mikeš had one song that he had in his mind months before even going to America. Another example is “Avanti Garda”, where we had the intro song in mind a long time before I started editing. The translation of the song name is “Prague citizens feeling fine”. We really wanted to use that song because of its name. But yeah, I already have like half of the songs in mind before editing, while I have to really search for the other half while editing. It can also be because the song I had in mind before doesn’t fit. I can spend hours searching for a song that really fits the vibe.

THE FULL PICTURE

I think it’s really hard to start an edit. I usually start with a random part of the video and just build on top of it. Usually where I know which clips I really want to use. For example, in “Avanti Garda” we wanted to have a night part. So I just started with adding all the night clips into a sequence, and then building from that. After that, I had a few other ideas, such as having a part where I only used street audio. People playing on the instruments in the streets, or just some random guys singing a football chant. I could then slowly build up the whole thing from there. I sometimes build the edit in both directions. I don’t really start somewhere and just go forward. Expand what I have in any direction, until it has a beginning and an ending.

MAIN FOCUS

What I really like about other videos is when they feel like they were three minutes long, and it was actually something like twenty. Great watchability I would say. I don’t know. I guess my main focus would be showing the jumps and the emotions that come with them. To show that in the best light I can. As well as connecting the filming with the editing. Already thinking of how to do the double angle on the spot, so it works in the edit. I know I want to use the fisheye filming for just one part of the line, and that I want to use the long lens for the entire line.

THE CUTTING

One factor for sure is the music. If the cut is on beat or if it makes sense with the music. When I have a double angle I try to make the cut as seamless as possible, to get continuous movement. I also like to edit with the sound within the clip. Such as matching the sound of the hands banging on the wall during a kong pre, or something like that. I would say the main things would be music and making sense of double angles.

BEFORE EXPORT

Before exporting the “Avanti Garda” movie, I was doing all the color grading. I didn’t manage to do it all perfectly for the premiere at the goodbye Vltavska Jam, so afterwards I was adding more layers of color grade and adjustment layers. Before export, I don’t do much work with the sound. So once the cuts are done I go into sound design. I really enjoy making the sound design perfect. Making sure the music or landings aren’t too loud. Making the sounds as seamless as possible, like making the audio longer and having it overlap from the clip before. Simply avoiding harshly cut audio.

In my experience it is very important that I watch the edit with my friends. Usually I am super over focused on stuff while I’m editing. Watching it with people who haven’t seen it so many times helps me to see the bigger picture. I’m a perfectionist in places where there’s no need for It. Therefore it’s very important for me to rewatch the edit, as well as have someone who hasn’t seen anything at all watch it.

FINAL EXPORT

I don’t think of anything in particular. I have a good friend who has worked a lot with Premiere Pro, so I always discuss with him and explore the best settings for the export. Usually I export the video, watch it, and then maybe do another five exports because I found minor mistakes. It’s hard to watch the entire project in Premiere. I think I had eight final exports on our last project, before being like, yeah that’s the one!

FAVORITE EDIT, SO FAR

For sure “Avanti Garda”, as it was such a huge learning curve for me. That’s actually kind of how Avanti Garda came to be. Me getting HD cameras on tapes, almost two years ago. The idea was to document everything in Prague and make a little edit of it. It started with a smaller group of people, hunting for cool stuff. It was important for me because before Avanti Garda, Mikeš and Mati would do all the editing. Now with me doing all the filming I could visualize the edit while filming. Besides learning how to film and edit, it really got me into trying to build my name as a filmmaker and editor, which has got me into the position I am now. I’m really grateful for it and for all my friends in Avanti Garda trusting me with it. It got me to the level I am today, and it made me fall in love with filming and editing.”

Ollie Durie

KIPA

KIPAMAGAZINE.COM

Yoyoyoyo! Jan here. Much love to Kipa for featuring my art in their Magazine! It means a lot to me, since I've been looking up to them for years now. I'm an athlete myself, but people mostly know me for my photography (when they do). I actually don't see myself as a photographer, but rather as an artist. Parkour is art to me and so are the videos and photos I make.

I try to not be limited by the beliefs we have as a society right now. I try my best to see things how they really are and show people how I see the world. I always get frustrated when people complain about things too much. I think that they are missing out on the beauty we have everywhere around us (and I do believe in the Law of Attraction). Drew Taylor (Public) inspired me to photograph the little interesting weird objects you find on the street and through a reel I saw from Rafe Kelly, I kind of got what I find special about Parkour (one of many things of course, I'm a nerd).

We as parkour people romanticize the world, not using everything as it was intended to be used or seen. I think there is a lot of power in this. With photography and videos I can achieve the same; I like to make „shitty" things look beautiful, in order to show people that everything is a matter of perspective..

Art By
Jan Simon

FES

CRACK STONE

During the summer of 2023, Gefam brought eleven people to Frankfurt to see how these guys' ideas, flavors & personalities blend together with the busy city and its blunt spots. After two weeks of filming plus months in production, the final video piece is just about ready.

During the final hours of editing, we spoke to Gefam's own prince - Luca Beaufort, about his approach to making the project happen.

Interview by
Joel Larsson
Transcription and Editing by
Kevin Franzén, Helena Margot Ryan
Photography by
Jan Simon & Joel Larsson

What is Crackstone?

Well, Crackstone is derived from the idea of making a Capstone video, just with our type of movement. People in Gefam, we don't do big gaps or crazy athletic feats. We're more focused on line building, funk and swagger. Not to sound too cringe, but that's basically what we wanted to focus on. The more dancy side of Parkour, instead of just big sends. That's what I like seeing the most, and I feel like we should give this a platform as well. The people that are doing this kind of movement, instead of the Scandrett's, the Verky's and the Dom's of the world, who send big stuff. I'm not saying that they don't make cool lines as well. But most of the stuff you see from them are big singular movements. And we like the swirly dirly.

So that being the vision and the goal with the project, how did you make it happen?

Well, I had the idea last year and I actually wanted to film it the year before too. But we just got too busy. However, in January this year, I set it as one of my "to do's for this year." I had a little collection on my Instagram of all the people that I really fuck with, mostly from Europe. I obviously had a few Americans in there, but since we're paying this out of Gefam's pockets, we sadly didn't have the funds to fly people out from America. It would literally have been a video with only one athlete if our budget had stayed the same. But yeah, just messaging people, talking to people at jams and seeing if they're keen on making this video. Since there are not a lot of video projects happening outside of team videos, everyone was super down. I imagine it's the same for you guys. Like when shooting for "BERLIN" and you asked Kacper Kośmider (cosmo) to join. He's just down. People want to be part of something in this culture. When I was 14, my dream or expectation was that when I'm 21, I'm going to be so good that people are going to fly me out to film video projects. I was going to travel across the world and shoot stuff for Storm Freerun or Team Farang or fucking whatever. But that just never happened, because these teams, first of all, fell apart at some point or just stayed within their team. And as for Gefam, we're kind of moving away from just being a parkour crew. We want to be more of a parkour brand or just a brand in general. So how we keep our foot in the culture is to, you know, fund video projects like these and release fucking sick videos every year. Next year, we're trying to do four of these — ideally. I would need to check budgets and stuff. It would definitely be a smaller crew because we had 11 athletes on Crackstone.

Following up on that - since you had so many people involved, what were the good outcomes of that? And what were the challenging bits?

Well, we filmed the whole project in the span of two weeks. Some people were there for one week, some people were there for four days, and some people were there for the whole two weeks. Everyone wasn't there at the same time, which was pretty nice. Although, we still flooded the whole apartment. Hosting was super stressful. Not for me personally, but my roommates were a bit pissed since the kitchen always looked like ass after Safier Elzinga had cooked a meal. Or us getting home drunk at fucking 3 a.m, searching for Ryuya Shirai's phone in the hallway, stuff like that. But the filming stuff wasn't really an issue because we had two cameras and we always got two angles of each line. Except when it really didn't make sense of course. I feel like everyone made their runs and then waited their turn for one person to get their clip, and then when that person was done, they could continue on with their lines. It never felt like we didn't have enough cameras. Everyone was super patient and chill about the filming situation.

So it's still like one training/good workflow type of thing?

Yeah. I don't think we ever rushed a session. Sometimes it happened, like when Amir Kaiser was here for example. He couldn't come out most of the days, and once we got him out we also got hung up on one spot. I wasn't even there because I had to study for my fucking final exams. He was really eager to get clips, and then he just fucking wrecked himself on a big ass running pre because he felt the stress of needing to perform, which I personally would never put on these people because I want everyone to stay safe, but I also understand that as an athlete, when you get the opportunity to perform you want to go as hard as you can. So I definitely understand that Amir was a bit more stressed. Because it's also a platform. Gefam doesn't have the most subscribers on YouTube or whatever, but I would hope it's still culturally relevant. Some of the people we featured only have like 800 followers on Instagram, for whom, when put in perspective, Gefam kind of becomes a soapbox.

How is Crackstone going to stand out from other projects that we've seen from you guys?

I think it's just going to be, this sounds so corny, a whole different vibe. The usual Gefam video consists of happy, carefree, we don't give a fuck kind of energy. But Safier really challenged me with this edit. It was supposed to come out sooner, but I treated it like a normal Gefam edit. And he was like "bro, this needs to be a piece of art more than an actual Gefam video", which I still find hard to understand, but I kind of get what he's getting at. When I started, I edited clip after clip, bam, bam, bam, bangers. But especially with all the stuff coming out of America right now, like Lullaby and Maven, people are really pushing the boundaries on what a parkour edit can be. We definitely want more to feel, more breathing time and not just bang, bang, bang. So it's going to be a lot more slow paced music, not too much, you know, bam, bam, bam, hip hop kind of vibe. Just to give the single moves and the lines a bit more space. That way you can appreciate them more. We did a good job on filming, but I wish we could have really honed in on getting crazier angles since we were such a big group of people. I was unfortunately the only Gefam member running this project. None of the other guys could help me because they were all busy doing freelancing. It was mostly Safier and I on the camera. And yeah we just didn't have enough time to get all the beautiful shots we wanted, whilst capturing all the lines that were happening on the day.

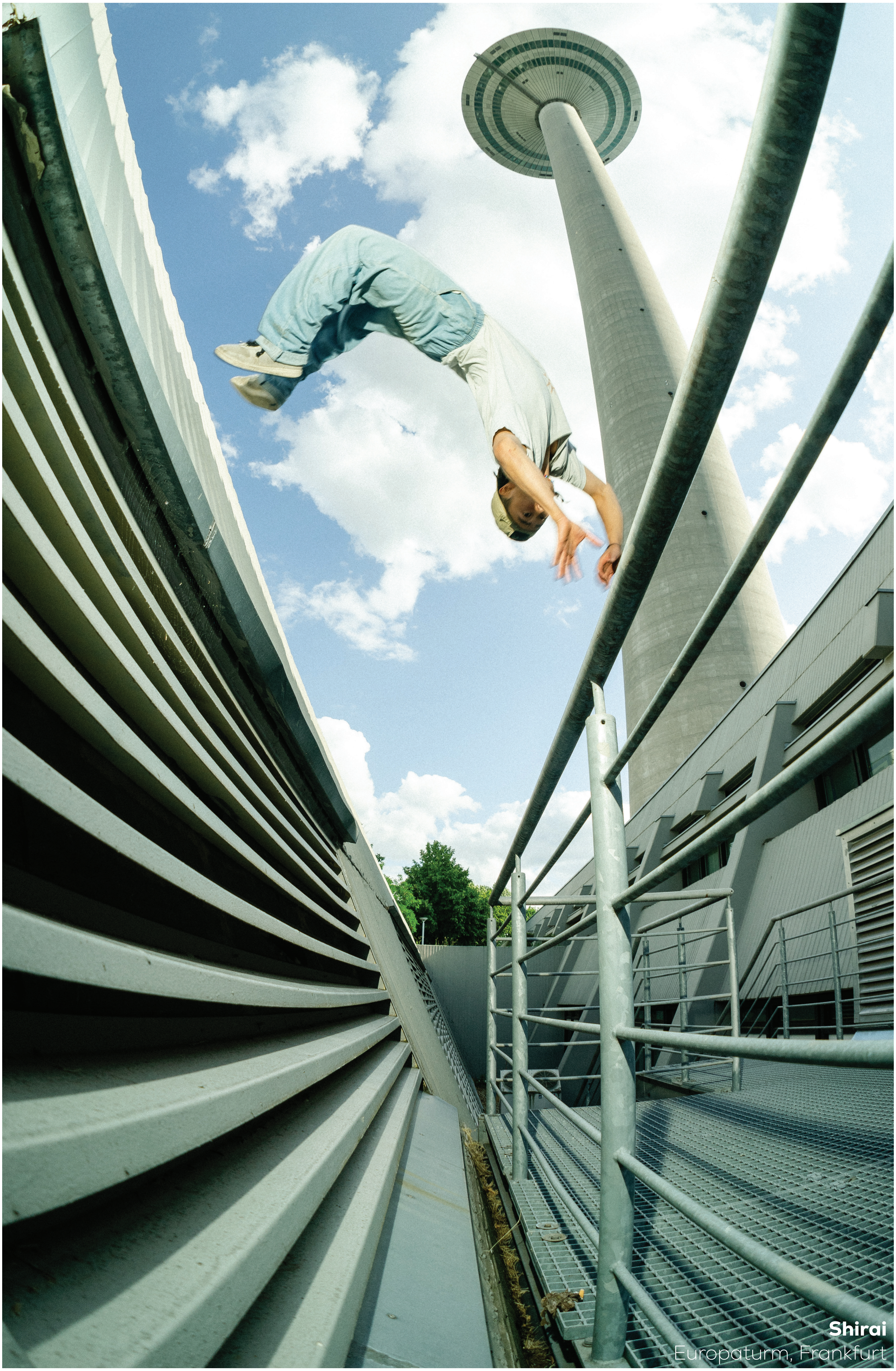
There's a few shots in parkour videos where I'm like, "wow, this is just so good." I think having architecture and photography play more of a role in filming parkour videos is the goal. Because as much as we shine, the architecture that we jump on is also super fucking important. If the walls aren't placed a certain way, we couldn't even do this line. Just putting more of an accent on that would be lovely in the future. But also we're not trying to get too Eminem with it. I think being too technical about stuff can also end up looking like you're trying too hard sometimes. But I don't think we've even touched that level yet. There's still a lot of space in the middle where I want to be moving. But we'll see how this goes in future projects.

I saw this story on Instagram, where this snowboarder was talking about video parts. She said, "If my filmer doesn't know how to capture this or doesn't have a beautiful shot, I'm not going to do it." Which is kind of on the other side of the spectrum, and I don't completely agree with it. But having so much focus on the video side of things is also super interesting. I think that if you're shooting your part, it should be very important. But also to cut us some slack, we filmed this in two weeks. I think for the time we had and all the people that were there, we definitely did a good job.

The thing is, these people are hungry. I want to do stuff, they want to do stuff. It's just like doing it alone is kind of hard. Why not be the guy who enables these kinds of projects? And we're not like Motus where we can sponsor athletes and pay them jack shit. So why not just do singular video projects, no contracts, no obligation to wear any clothing, just telling them to come out and do some cool stuff? That shit actually fills my heart. Especially because I would have loved to be Josef Vyhlas (Pepa) when I was 15 and have someone call me and be like "yo, let's shoot this video!". There's a few times that happened for me. Like sometimes Jason Paul would ask me to come when they were in Frankfurt or Mannheim. I never made the cut or anything, but just him texting me that made me so excited. Now Imagine I got to travel across the country to film a video project. That's the fucking dream! If the old generation didn't do it, I guess we have to. Someone's gotta do it.

There's not a lot of money in this. That's why we're trying to be a regular brand as well. We really want to have our roots in this sport, and even if we end up going mainstream in Germany with our shit, we would still be making these videos at least four times a year or something.

I feel like why it's named Crackstone needs an explanation. The WhatsApp chat I made was called "the video I was talking about". And when we started filming, we still didn't have a name. And I live in Frankfurt, the Central Station area. We have a big crack and heroin problem there. The city has help centers around this area so the junkies don't spread across the whole city. It was some of the athlete's first time in Frankfurt, and getting to my house is kind of a hassle. So that was kind of their first impression of Frankfurt. I don't know who said it first, probably Safier, he just jokingly said crackstone. But then everybody just started saying it as a joke, or after getting a clip. So at some point we just decided, okay, this is a thing and it named itself. Why the fuck should we try to put some other name on it? It's kind of funny. It might be a bit edgy. But I just love the organic-ness of it, if that's even a word? You'll see in the video. There are a lot of junkie shots. You'll see.



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un
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CRACK STONE
PLAYING ON GEFAM YOUTUBE

KIPA

Street Jam Summer 2023
Stockholm, Sweden

KIPA Street Jam 2023 — well, what's there to say? Just like last year it was an amazing turnout with people coming from all over the world to destroy our spots once again. The days were fully packed with training, swimming and best of all catching up with good friends. Not forgetting the afterparty almost getting ruined when the electricity generator broke, well, when Joel broke it. After a long two hours of having the KIPA mechanics trying to fix it, the motor roaringly started to run again, which was shortly followed by a KIPA chant. The party had been saved, and we all celebrated with a dance party until sunrise. All in all, it was another great year and we can't wait to make the next edition even bigger and better next summer!

During each jam we host a photography contest, in which the winners of each day receive prizes from the jam sponsors. These photos have been sent to us by recent jam winners, and we would like to thank them for capturing these moments for us. These memories will be immortalized as a feature in this magazine.

Shot By

Ivaylo Erev

Shot By

Elias Giselbrecht

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TRY LESS

TMPST PRESENTS TRY LESS

BY NATE WESTON

TEMPEST
TRY LESS

Interview by
Jake Chapman
Photography by
Anthony Minassian

Nate Weston is an athlete who needs no introduction, he's been captivating us for years with his innovative and unconventional style, coupled with parkour technique that is calibrated with surgical precision. In October, Tempest Freerunning released Nate's newest project: "Try Less". Inspired by his journey back to health and the wisdom of writer Charles Bukowski, "Try Less" marks Nate's first video part since 2020's Skull Chatter. In a stunning return to form, Nate mingles raw athleticism with a backdrop of emotion and a challenge to expand one's perspective. I sat with Nate just a few weeks after the release – only slightly fanboying inside – to beg his thoughts on "Try Less", injuries, and more.

SECURITY CAMERAS IN USE

Me: How are you doing, man?
Nate: Doing well! Taking it easy today. I'm a little sore from training the past few days. It's good to take some time and do this interview. I'm stoked to be part of the next issue, man. It's exciting!

Me: It's sick as fuck to have you!
Nate: Thank you, man. It's been a fun year, fun to get back to training again. For the longest time it felt like I was out of the game, and there was a loss of community and training – between injuries and Covid. It's been really good to be able to get out to Europe and get to the KIPA Jam again.

Me: It's good to see you moving again. You came off a broken ankle in the last year, is that right?
Nate: Yeah, it was weird. I was in kind of a limbo situation with a stunt job that fell through, and training was just feeling weird at the time. I was skating out front of Tempest with Jeff Garrido, not thinking at all, and fucking rolled my ankle super hard. I thought it was probably fine, but went to the hospital and got X-Rays anyways. The doctor said that they didn't see a break, just a Grade 2 sprain, so something that takes around 6-8 weeks of recovery. I didn't even get a boot or a cast or anything. So, for two months I was walking around and rehabbing an already broken ankle. I went back to the doctor since it was getting worse – still apparently no breaks. Then, I got an MRI a month later and it turned out that I had a crack in my talus, which connects your tibia and fibula to the bones in your foot, as well as two severely torn ligaments. In total, it entailed five months-ish without training. Getting back up to 100% was another beast to tackle. A lot of it was mental, like the fear of breaking it again or the thought of "what if something else happens, because I'm working around it so often?" That's what happened and my knee started hurting. The hardest part was initially trusting the ankle again. Phantom pain is totally real. Kristine Dietrich, Max Henry's wife, was talking about phantom pain having come off of a broken leg, and despite being cleared for impact by a doctor, she felt as though it hurt as bad as it did when it was still broken. It was fine, but her brain was creating that signal. Your brain wants to protect you from causing that kind of trauma a second time. But easing back in was a big help. It wasn't until August or September 2022 before I started sticking precisions again. It was a really gradual process, thankfully. The biggest thing was though the mental hurdle, especially after having walked on a clicking broken ankle for months because the doctor gave me an incorrect diagnosis. But it does make you appreciate the opportunity to train again.

Me: Just hearing 6-8 weeks at the outset and thinking that's the best case scenario blows.
Nate: In my eleven years now, that was the longest I've ever had to step away from training. I think, maybe it comes with getting older, too. It was my left ankle, which has always been my bad ankle. Probably around five or six years ago, I was going to the doctor pretty consistently because my ankle just fucking hurt all the time. Turns out I have tons of calcified bone

fragments floating in my ankle from years of rolling my ankles, ankle thinging, etc. Those cause scar tissue to build up, so now I have two malleolus on my ankle – like that bone that sticks out – I've got two hahaha. At the time, I thought it would be career-ending. I'd never gone without training for that long – from two to three to eventually six months. Then, I had to work back up again. All in all, it stretched into almost a year exactly. It was February 2022 when I broke my ankle and February 2023 I got my first clip for "Try Less", which was the side-pre to the rail, to double cork. It came full circle, which is part of what made the project so meaningful to me.

Me: That's badass. Getting into "Try Less" a little bit, the impetus of this video sounds like it was the milestone of ticking off a specific challenge, "Skull Chatter" was similarly inspired by breaking a challenge.
Nate: I think that comes down to my process as an athlete. Day to day, I'm a pretty anxious person. If I'm working on a video project, then I really love to work backwards. For "Skull Chatter", the first clip I got was the side-pre on the Santa Monica Rails. To me it alleviates the stress of going out and looking for the hardest thing I can do for the video. I hate the idea of trying to one-up myself constantly. It stresses me out! If I get a clip that makes me feel like it could be the ender and it doesn't have to be, but if it feels like it could be, that creates a foundation for me to build from without being concerned with difficulty, difficulty, difficulty. I think, if you're constantly trying to find that day to day, then it can be overwhelming. It's similar to "Skull Chatter" in the way that both video projects come from similar inspirations. "Skull Chatter" coming from the works of Alan Watts and what he had to say about life in general. This time it was Charles Bukowski. For me, I obviously get inspired by athletes throwing down super hard, but I really get inspired by modes of thought and different perspectives. It also depends on what you're going through at the time, and that's part of why these projects mean so much to me. It's a reflection on what I was going through in that time and place. With "Skull Chatter" in 2020 it was a whole mental battle with myself, and in a way it has led me to be able to deal with what I've been going through. There are still emotional challenges and the difficulty of figuring out life – and then on top of that, my body is not physically working the way I need it to, so that I can do the things I want to do.

Alan Watts touched on it with The Reverse Law, which says that the more you want something or try to hold onto something, the more it seems to slip away. I took a lot from that because for so long, parkour has been my thing, and still is. This is what I was born to do, is just train. There was a part of me – especially during Covid – where I had to step back and contemplate things. I ended up not training for a couple of months and went home to my parents' house, helped them on the farm, skated, lived simply and came back a better athlete somehow. I felt like I was jumping further, I had more confidence in my training, and I started to think that maybe just because you do something over and over every day, doesn't mean you're going to see success. It's good to take a step back and evaluate things. That's why, when I was going through my ankle break, I listened to Charles

Bukowski say in a kind of morbid way, “Don’t try.” Like, if you’re going to do something, really go for it. I got a lot of strength from hearing his perspective. If something makes you happy and it’s your passion, see it through to the end. It was so hard to see past my injury to the positive outcomes. Looking back, it’s given me a lot of perspective, which is the best thing. You’re not going to get perspective from living a life of comfort. You’ll lose touch. I’m stoked on the movement and proud of what I have accomplished, but these videos are a time stamp of what I’ve gone through. Much of art is created through pain.

Me: I think I get what you’re saying. Hardship can be a grounding and humanizing experience.
Nate: Exactly, it’s pretty profound, I think.

Me: One of the things that I thought was interesting, those who don’t know Charles Bukowski beyond the short sound bite at the beginning of the video, just get a title that says, “Try Less,” alongside your ridiculously technical movement style. There’s such a juxtaposition there.
Nate: Hahaha, I’ve heard that from a few people, “Looks like you tried pretty fucking hard.” I obviously had to really fucking try. It’s just about not holding onto things too firmly and going with the flow. I kind of kicked myself after getting the first clip, because I destroyed my body doing it. My ankle felt great, thankfully. But my knee gave out after going after that one challenge for two or three hours. By the time I did the dub cork, I couldn’t land anything anymore and my knee was giving out. That experience of getting that clip took me out of training for another month because I had to rehab my knee. It’s in those moments where I think maybe I should have done five or ten and called it, and come back a different day. It isn’t all or nothing.

Me: That battle can be meaningful though too.
Nate: Yeah, you’re right. There was something that Dylan Baker was talking about. There are some challenges that you’re willing to put it all on the line for. I feel that 100%.

Me: Touching on spot modding a little bit. Why was modifying the tree necessary for that particular line, and when does spot modification go too far?
Nate: I was kind of nervous actually to show the process of us adding that block to the tree. You can’t tell, but the tree itself is really awkward and the block makes that line possible. I had it so ingrained in my mind that I only wanted one swing, I didn’t want to swing forward, back, and then go.

Me: So like Ethan Rud’s line in Hazel that’s at that spot.
Nate: That was the inspiration behind the line! Even though he busted his ass on the one swing, I was so fucking impressed by that. I wanted to approach it differently than he did, and there was no way to make it work without that little foothold. Maybe there was a different way to do it and I just couldn’t find it. In my head, as long as the modification makes the clip work, then I have no issues with it at all. In skating, they change spots all the time. It’s a slippery slope, I think. Like, if you get too in the weeds about spot modding, then are we allowed to use chalk? Why wear shoes? I’m all for modifying, honestly. It gives the spot different perspectives and possibilities. I challenge anyone to do the same line without a foothold.

Me: The modification you made is so minor too, it’s not like you brought stacks of pallets or something.
Nate: It’s funny you mention that, because I brought a few pallets to a spot like last week. I have two pallets in my car as we speak. If that’s what it takes to make a scary challenge enjoyable, then I’d much rather do that than beat my body up trying to see if a challenge is even possible without them.

Me: What signifies the end of filming a video part for you? When is enough finally enough?
Nate: That’s a tricky question, I don’t think we ever really knew. We stopped filming for “Try Less” in August, I believe. The whole post-production process took a lot of time obviously, and getting ready for the release, the whole time I was wondering if we needed more footage. It was nice to work with Pavel on the edit. I edited “Skull Chatter” and I’ve always been the one in front of the camera and in the editing chair for all of my videos. It was interesting having him behind the computer, saying that if I’m happy with the movement and ticked all of the boxes for what I want a video to be, then we could just add character and make it mine. Like, you’re at the session with me. Because anyone can make a highlight reel and put their clips back to back. It’s an intuition thing, deciding if a video is finished or not.

Me: I was nearly brought to tears by your phone call to your parents in the video. How often do you make your parents aware of the challenges you’re working on and do you always call them afterward?
Nate: Actually, it’s funny, I kind of have a deal with my mom, where I’ll always kind of mention the things that I’m doing, roof gaps, consequence, or whatever. The way that she deals with it and what she says is, “I completely trust you, whatever decision you make is the best decision. Don’t involve me too much, but let me know after so I know you’re okay.” This one was a different process for me and it took almost two months to work up to and I had mentioned it a few times. She was always so sweet and gave me pep talks about trusting my process, and so when it finally happened I knew I had to call my mom and dad.

I was so happy and wanted to let them know I’m okay. It’s tough. I can’t imagine being a parent and seeing your kids doing dangerous things. They’ve always been so supportive for me and my brothers. I have three older brothers and we all do very different things. I think there’s a lot to be said for guiding your children but once they’ve found their thing, just being there to support it is all they can do. It was a very emotional thing for me, finally breaking the challenge. I’d pictured it so many times and after it was broken, there was almost no surprise. It was like there was no other way it could have gone. This was what I’d prepared for and if there was that large of a chance of something bad happening, then I wouldn’t have committed in the first place.

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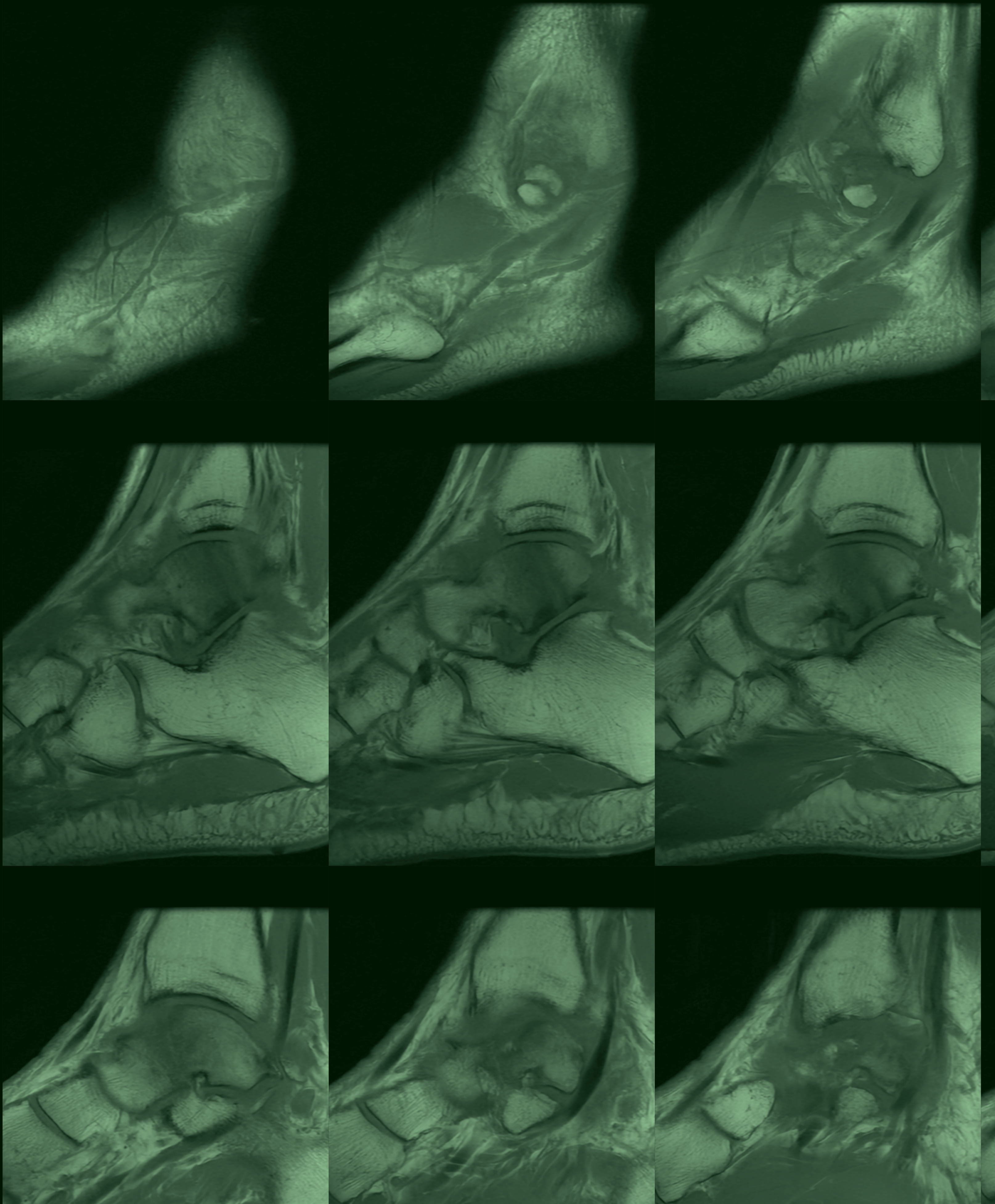
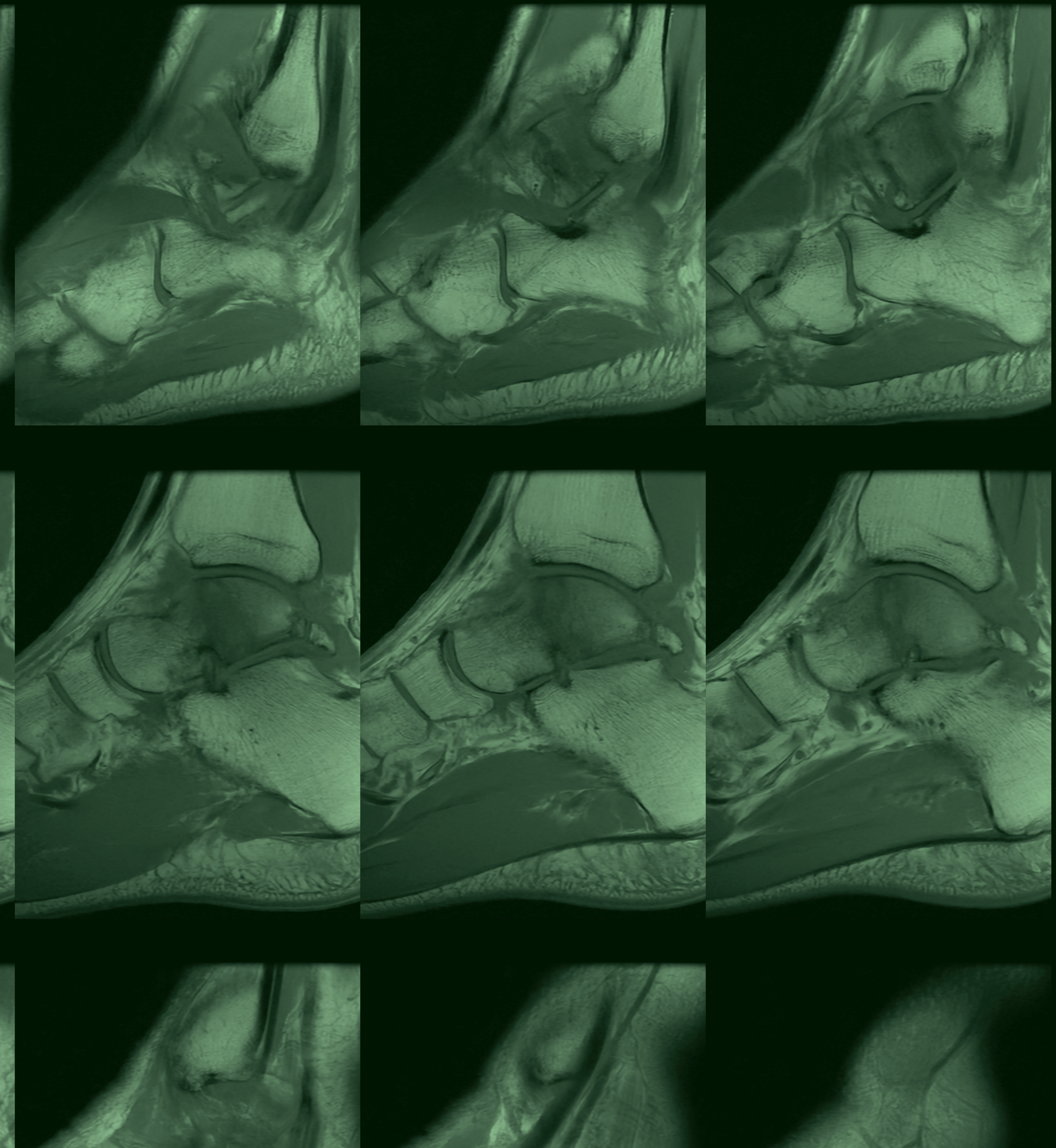


Nate Weston’s Ankle Sequence



Interviewed & Edited by
Jake Chapman
Photography by
Noah Heath

MANOR

dear **Chris**

Maven *Chris Roff*
Filming *Connor Pennington, Noah Heath* **Produced** *The Commons*
Additional Filming *Ethan Rud, Naomi Pearlman, Ross Allen, Ezra Schroer, Trystan Puckhaber*
Edited *Noah Heath* **Graphic Design** *Yaron Erkin*
Featured *Chris Roff, Marquis Bennett, Ritto Nasty, Jonas Sell, Eli Sell, Rasheed Dixon*
Thanks *Philladelphia Parkour Community, Uncle Iroh*
Manor
Noah Heath, Connor Pennington,
Ethan Rud, Yaron Erkin,
Naomi Pearlman

Video production is the conjoined twin of action sports: one taking a leading role in imparting the narrative experience of athletes and filmmakers, the other meticulously crafting that desperately sought after spectacle which makes a permanent steading in the hearts and minds of the audience. “Maven” is a video that has succeeded in that regard. Working alongside multi-disciplinary production house Manor, Chris Roff exhibits his inimitable style of unorthodox skills on a massive scale across the backdrop of Philadelphia and Boston’s historic Victorian architecture in a way that can only be described as American Gothic Parkour. The Manor production team (consisting today of Noah Heath, Ethan Rud, Yaron Erkin, Connor Pennington and Naomi Pearlman) has captured the beauty and energy of these historic cities as well as Chris’ ability to explore his surroundings as masterfully as an oil painter makes a stroke of the brush. In the wake of releasing “Maven” I met with Chris Roff, Noah Heath and Connor Pennington to discuss the experience of releasing their first film under the banner of Manor.

Me: How are you all feeling in the aftermath of Manor’s first release?

Noah: I feel really stoked on the project. It’s probably the most fun I’ve had working on a project since I started filming. I loved being in Philly. I’m proud of the video we made and the experience that we had, but I’m dissatisfied with how many people made the effort to go and watch it. I thought this would be a really good chance to get some money for you, Chris, and maybe we did a little bit, but I thought it would be more. But as far as the project goes, and the way people have reacted to it, the screening and everything, I’m very happy.

Connor: Before the web release, when we screened the video for the first time at “Join or Die”, that was amazing. This is probably the first video where I’ve been solely involved in the production behind the camera, and seeing all the footage we gathered over the few months of filming was amazing. That and the look on Chris’s face when he saw the final cut at “Join or Die”. That was a really special moment.

Noah: Didn’t you cry, Chris?

Chris: Yeah, I was a little bit. It brought back a lot of memories of people being in Philly, filming the project and everything. It was just good vibes, you know? Going to work early in the morning, getting back, and all of you guys being at the house; having everybody there waiting to go train. The expectation of going home and knowing everyone wants to go out and have fun. That’s what I enjoyed most about the filming process. It felt more to me like we were just going out to have fun with whatever we found than it did like pressure to get clips.

Noah: Like a family.

Me: Chris, was your first viewing of the finished video at “Join or Die”?

Chris: I’d seen previous edits, but I had never seen the final, polished product.

Noah: I wanted Chris to see the video to get approval to move forward, but I didn’t want to show him the completely finished project. It’s tempting to want to watch your own footage over and over again, but I think there’s something special about being really surprised by the culmination of your work.

Chris: I was talking to Ritto about that. When you sent me the rough cut of the video, I was saying, “I don’t know if I want to watch it right now. I kind of want the first time I see it to be on the big screen.” I sat there looking at the e-mail for like an hour and fucking clicked it.

Me: So how much time did each of you spend in the making of "Maven"?

Connor: I was in Philly for a little over a week and spent a couple of extra weekends filming between Boston and Philadelphia.

Noah: I was there for about two weeks. All told, I'd say we were filming for a month or so total. The edit, I'd say, cumulatively took about a week straight.

Me: Chris, how was it going from working a laborious job in construction every day straight to training aggressively over the course of a month?

Chris: You know, it's strange, that my body felt perfect every day. In the mornings sometimes, my body would hurt at work, but the work was almost like a warm-up to go train later. I'd get to work just tired as hell, but after busting ass for eight hours, I was ready to go jump on things again. There were rest days here and there, but we were out pretty much every day.

Me: Chris, I wanted to ask you about your line building. You use transitional skills so unconventionally that it almost seems like improvisation. How often do you execute a line to the letter vs. rolling with the punches, so to speak?

Chris: That kind of started recently. A few months before filming started, I took a trip to Portland and spent a lot of time training with Ezra Schroer. Ezzy's style definitely rubbed off on me. But I could see in his movement that he would often land a trick differently than how he intended but would continue moving regardless. He was on-the-spot improvising different landings into different tricks. I have a different set of skills than Ezzy does, so I've been able to put my own spin on it. In a lot of things I do, I won't always land the same way, but I always have some transition I can dive into to fill that space. I think why I really like the funky, off axis things, because no matter how you land, you have options.

Me: Noah and Connor, the artistic direction behind Chris felt like it represented his movement well. How do you approach filming and editing b-roll to suit a specific project?

Connor: That was actually a big issue we ran into with this project. We realized we didn't film enough b-roll. Most of the stuff that's in the video, that's pretty much all the b-roll. That was a new experience for us, realizing that we need to film more b-roll for these kinds of projects. Some of the best b-roll we got was just capturing Philly, which is such a special city. I'd never been to Philly before but there really is something different and special about that place. Capture the city, like really capture how it feels to exist in that space if you can.

Noah: Another thing is that we shot a lot of the b-roll, or art-roll, after filming the majority of the movement. Filming the fence designs and fixtures on buildings and things. I don't know why, but "Maven" to me is a very medieval word, and I wanted to convey that with the art-roll and editing. Also, with Manor we're trying to portray a certain aesthetic, but remain flexible. For the first release, we wanted to relay our main aesthetic as well.

Me: That's something I wanted to touch on. The aesthetic you cultivated almost feels like it grandfathers Hazel into a Manor production, with the tone and somewhat dark approach. How do you put your stamp on a project as a filmmaker while still representing the athlete whose movement you're there to showcase?

Noah: I feel like as long as you get footage of the movement, the athlete's personality, and have an idea of the tone you want to relay to the audience. In the end as the editor, it's your job to find the in-betweens of those things and how they connect. Honestly, with this project, I don't know if I did the greatest job marrying those ideas. I think they came together well because they all looked pretty more than anything. That's something I'm trying to improve on for future releases. So I guess I don't really know. It's something that I'm still trying to figure out.

Chris: I think you did a grand ol' job of it.

Noah: Thanks buddy.

Me: From a filming perspective, were there any clips that posed you guys a unique challenge?

Connor: Hell yeah! The clip where Chris did a swing-cast-touch-rod3 from the underside of an overpass, down to a sand pile. I was trying to think of a way to film that clip and I was looking at the setup and realized that I couldn't get a good understanding of what the challenge was about if I filmed with a long lens from the ground. So, I had to climb up into the bridge-rafters or whatever and hang from the I-beam with the camera out while Chris is doing his swing cast right in front of me. I was just dangling over this 20 foot drop. That was a scary one to film, but I'm so glad I made the choice to film it the way I did.

Noah: For me the hardest clip to shoot was the ender. We didn't even know it was going to be the ender at the time. I have a really hard time filming people at height, especially life or death height. This wasn't mentioned, but Jake was doing it as well. So, I was standing up there feeling so nervous on every attempt. I don't know why I thought a fisheye lens was the choice for that shot either. Thankfully, Trystan was on the ground with his handicam and a long lens, and that's really the shot that did it justice. But that was a really challenging one for me to film. I think my anxiety was preventing me from thinking properly, hahaha.

Chris: Yeah. I remember that actually. That one was hard for me, too. I wanted it in the video but I also didn't want to watch it over and over and get myself all worked up again. Ritto has the same thing, where he doesn't like to watch me do height stuff - and he and a bunch of people were all on the ground a block away. As soon as I stuck it, I could hear all of them screaming for me from way out there, it was insane.

Me: You guys mentioned that there was a different ender at one point. What drove the decision to change end clips?

Chris: We had a huge problem getting enders. Every time we had an ender planned at a spot, we would get kicked. There were five different times, it was so fucking annoying. Then at one we had planned, I almost bailed on a nine-story drop, so that didn't even make it into the video. It's without a doubt the scariest thing I've ever done. It was a 14 foot running pre to a rail and the overshoot was a death drop. I didn't check the rail and prepping the jump, I learned just how wobbly the rail was.

Noah: Enders are a fairly new concept to parkour, even though they've been part of action sports for a really long time. I think the reason why we had a hard time getting the ender for this project, is that the ender has to be a clip that sticks out. It must be the most visually appealing or dangerous or mentally challenging. I feel like, an ender has to be an abrupt—Boom! —He just did that. But because Chris has a tendency towards such long lines it can make it difficult to get that perfect ender feeling. I think that's what we were chasing, but every time we would almost get it, we would get kicked.

Me: One thing I noticed, was the composition of the video made it seem like the colors of some spots were almost more important than the viability of the spot itself for parkour. And this was only compounded by Chris' fashion and skill choice. Can you guys speak on your spot selection process?

Connor: With spot selection, and spots that are gonna film – well.. it's interesting to find a balance. Basically, I didn't know the spots at all. I didn't know anything about Philly. On the first couple of days, we just went to Chris and Ritto's normal spots before we really branched out. Coming from my photography background, finding things that are not even unique, but things that make the shot special and composing the shot around that feature helps me a lot. I frame the shot like a photograph, then start to move away from that following where the movement leads. I'm new to filming, so I tried to stick to what I know. No matter what spot you're at, you can find a good composition. You just have to search around and find where that composition exists, and then let the movement fill the rest of the space organically.

Noah: Connor is our God-tier static shot guy.

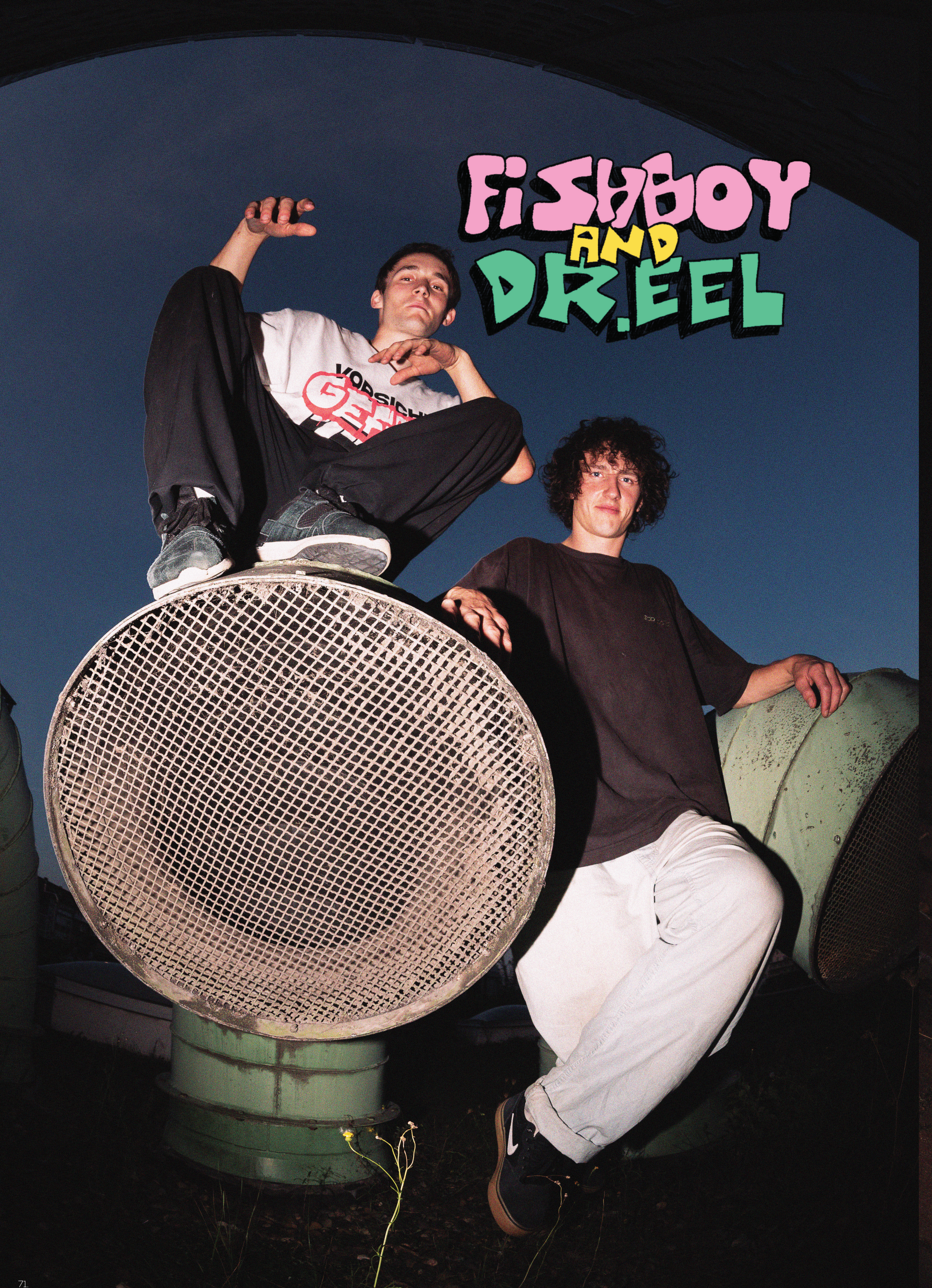
Me: Can you talk about what's next for Manor?

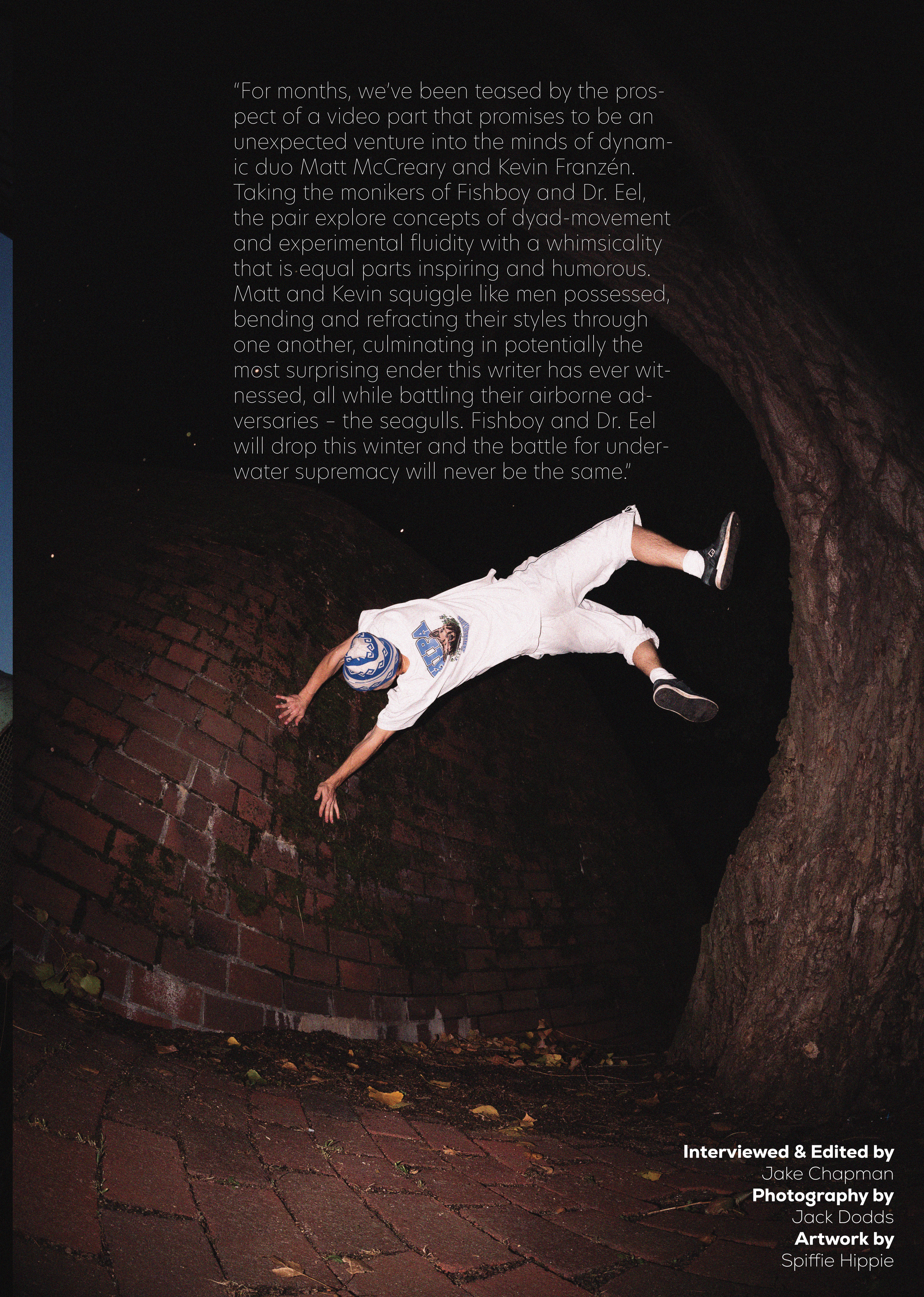
Noah: Next we've got a part we're filming with Ezra Schroer and we have Marquis Bennett afterwards. These will be coming out through the winter. Then, we have a feature length video in the works. I won't share too many details about that, because some things are still undecided. There are a few different plans for the future as well, but I can't speak too much on those either. There are cool people involved, that much I can say.

SANFORD & SON
JUNK
TEAM
K102
Racing
blank tradition

Shot by
Myles Ross
Boston, MA

FISHBOY AND DR.EEL





“For months, we’ve been teased by the prospect of a video part that promises to be an unexpected venture into the minds of dynamic duo Matt McCreary and Kevin Franzén. Taking the monikers of Fishboy and Dr. Eel, the pair explore concepts of dyad-movement and experimental fluidity with a whimsicality that is equal parts inspiring and humorous. Matt and Kevin squiggle like men possessed, bending and refracting their styles through one another, culminating in potentially the most surprising ender this writer has ever witnessed, all while battling their airborne adversaries – the seagulls. Fishboy and Dr. Eel will drop this winter and the battle for underwater supremacy will never be the same.”

Interviewed & Edited by
Jake Chapman
Photography by
Jack Dodds
Artwork by
Spiffie Hippie

Me: What can you say about Fishboy and Dr. Eel as a concept?
Matt: I think we started seeing each other more at jams, following each other's stuff on social media, and noticed that we have similar patterns of ideas, movement and training styles. We hung out more often, sharing ideas and vibing, and a few inside jokes started to emerge. Kevin would do something and I'd tell him that was like an "eel line" or looked like a worm or something.

Kevin: At Ollerup one year, we cemented the decision to make a video together. We had a wall session together at this one cool bouncy wall. We were working on it back and forth and playing around with ideas, and at one point I walked up to Matt and said, "What's up Fishboy?" I don't know why it became Fishboy, but it did. From there we spoke about making a video featuring Fishboy and Dr. Eel.

Me: So Kevin would be Dr. Eel and Matt Fishboy then? For some reason I had that switched in my head.
Kevin: A lot of people do and honestly I kind of agree. Matt's more "eely" than I am. Now it's a weird, funny, ironic thing. It's unexpected movement and unexpected names. And for the longest time it was this goofy joke. Like, we'd see each other at jams and be like, "So when is this huge project going to drop? When are we dropping our video?" And at some point we were like, "Maybe we should actually film something." We spoke about a date and it was mid-jam season. We decided to film right after the big Nordic jam tour that happened earlier this year. I could only go to two events – Matt you went to all three right?

Matt: Yeah, so it was three weeks between Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

Kevin: I had a week off, which I really needed. We decided to work on this project and booked our flights to Brighton, England at like 2:00 am at Kipa Street Jam.

Matt: We were just finally in the same place and it felt like we should solidify this now. Get the ball rollin'.

Me: Did you have any expectations for this project or was it more about just seeing what happened?
Kevin: I don't know if expectation is the right word… No yeah it kind of is. I had certain expectations, but within those expectations there were no expectations. Does that make sense?

Me: That's ambiguous, hahaha.
Kevin: I knew, we wanted every line to be special. I knew we wanted funky movement, that it could not just be a simple thing you've seen before. We wanted to experiment, wanted it to be new and strange. But my expectations within those parameters were very vague.

Matt: For me, when I spoke to people about shooting the project, it created more pressure. And I'm thinking, "Oh shit! People are expecting something special, so I have to – in some way – meet their expectation and churn out some new creative stuff. In the days immediately before the project, it became almost an enticing thing for me. I knew that people had these expectations and I had to switch those off, because if I went into the whole shooting process with that weight on my back, I would not have been able to do anything. So, enjoyment came from switching that off and just seeing what we filmed that day. If it was shit, it was shit and we'd go somewhere else.

Kevin: I feel like I built that same pressure on myself. I knew, that I wanted the video to be special, so I felt like everything had to be special. It's so hard to make something that feels entirely unique in a short amount of time. But knowing we had a second shoot planned really helped to take off that pressure. In the second part of the shoot, it felt great knowing that we already had lines. Having two shoots gave us the opportunity to take a step back, since the first shooting days had already gone so well, the pressure was off when it came to getting clips from the second shoot.

Matt: I also had the pressure of keeping up with Kevin, since he is a freak at generating lines. He just composes them *snaps fingers rapidly* so fucking quickly. If I do one good line over two days, that's more of my pace. Kevin just pumps shit out.

Kevin: What I found was that I would do three things in a day and Matt might do one, but his would outweigh mine because of the impact his style had. I had never thought of what Matt was doing and half the time Matt was doing the most fucked up stuff. That inspired me to do more fucking scary shit and take my time with it. Usually, I'm quick to choose lines, which can be good for filming videos, but for this video I felt like I could take two hours on a single line and come away with nothing, but that's okay. I think, we tried to meet in the middle as much as we could.

Me: You guys are very good at flirting with the spectrum of difficulty vs. creativity. Many purely creative skills aren't necessarily that technically difficult. How do you bridge the gap between doing something difficult enough for your skill level while also hitting unique creativity?
Kevin: I think, it comes down to the way we train. The way I train is trying to reinvent the wheel. I have this trick that I know I can do and I just want to see what else I can do with it. A great example of this is Nico Vanhole doing a flyaway-tac. Those moves are so simple, but together they're entirely unique, creative and add so much difficulty. Doing something new with something old is a huge help. As far as creating something entirely new, I feel like I don't think about bridging that gap much, rather that it comes pretty naturally to how I train.

Matt: I think it's very spot dependent. I just show up and see what tickles my pickle and go after that rather than really analyzing it.

Kevin: Matt has this thing where he looks for a tingle at a spot, which is funny, because I go around the entire spot and look at the first thing that comes to my mind. Then I think about how to extend that idea. Then I'll leave it or move it around, just kind of tug at the string until it leads me somewhere or unravels. When composing lines, if the creative part of the line didn't fulfil my personal idea of the difficulty I wanted, then I would depend more on moves before, after or into that section to bring up the difficulty. I didn't want to do creative things that were super easy, I wanted things that were scary and technically difficult, as well. There are some moves in there that are more difficult than creative. The roll on the green pipe into cartahara isn't necessarily that creative, but I felt like we had a small imbalance, where Matt had more bangers, I had more lines, so I needed to do a few more big single tricks. We tried to get a good balance across the whole project.

Me: You're both so adept at performing good lines anywhere. How much emphasis did you place on spot choice while filming?
Matt: Huge emphasis on spot choice for sure. We were very picky. For me it relates to getting the tingles. I'll arrive at a spot and I don't know what it is, maybe how the space feels or some particular feature that's calling me. During this project, if we arrived at a spot and something didn't call to me, then I didn't want to search for something like I might in a normal training session. Normally, I would do as Kevin – find a thread and follow it – but I was trying to be more reserved with how many threads I tried to follow. I knew, I only had so much energy, I'm a lot older than Kevin, so I can't be following all the threads, hahaha. I played it more carefully I think, in terms of reserving energy so I could do big things at the spots that really gave me tingles.

Kevin: I feel like what Matt did was smart. I often found myself halfway through a line before deciding that the effort wasn't worth it. Sometimes, Matt has this ability to recognize in an instant if something isn't right. He would stop in a moment and just say it wasn't worth pursuing it. I'd say, maybe we should film it and see, but he was adamant. I found that strange at first, seeing as this was the first time we'd really gone out training together. Training at jams is different from shooting a video. Being more isolated like on a shoot with a specific goal in mind, changes how you approach things compared to jam training.

Matt: For me, when it gets to the point in making a line where you just get frustrated, I feel like that directly affects how I look while I move. I feel, that if I'm enjoying myself, then my posture will be different, my face will be different and it just filters into the overall aesthetic of what you're trying to create. Normally, if I get frustrated, I'll just stop. When you get frustrated, Kevin, you push through and get it done. Sometimes, I should have done that and at least filmed it, but in my mind at the time I was just fucking done. I did find myself shouting way more often than ever before. I was so emotionally invested in the project.

star
jump
hor

Me: That's so funny. Knowing you a little bit, Kevin, it's hard to picture you getting truly furious, and Matt you seem so reserved, I would not expect to see you screaming. I'd love to see a pissed off Matt Mcreary.
Matt: Hahahaha, we should release some angry videos of us as teasers or something.

Me: After working together on this project, what do you appreciate most about each others' movement and creative process?
Kevin: I appreciate the variety of Matt's movement. I feel like he has a very fluid style and yet there are so many clips in this video from his catalogue, where he can burst out this immense power from nowhere. Which – having spoken about it now – comes from how you used to train. I find it really impressive and refreshing. I like the way Matt takes an idea and I think I know where he's going but then he completely flips it on its head. Then, I kind of get it again. A lot of times, we will work on something in very much the same way, but then every now and again, Matt will take his ideas in a completely different direction than I would and those times I'm really intrigued by his thought process.

Matt: I really love how deep Kevin's bag of tricks goes. From the surface level tricky, low to the ground moves to the big double rotations, the scale of his movement is insane and his knowledge base is really vast. It's something I've always wanted but couldn't obtain or really never felt like it fit my movement. But I really admire that. You can just choose from this massive spectrum of movement options.

Kevin: I wouldn't say you're limited. But I get what you're saying.

Matt: Yeah, I've never known someone to have such a wide range of ideas at any spot and to be able to piece them together so quickly. My meter runs out so fast. If I turn up at one spot and get the inspiration to do a line, normally, that will zap my energy to create anything else. But Kevin sees a new spot and is like a brand new person. He recharges so fucking fast! I also really enjoyed his enthusiasm on shooting days. I felt like my energy was so up and down and moody and he has this consistent enthusiasm.

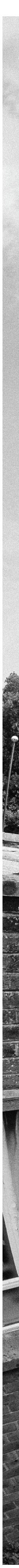
Kevin: I feel like you're better at coming up with more things at a single spot and I need to see something new in order to feel that recharge, if that makes sense. I think, you could spend more time at a spot and find more use in it, whereas I need to look at something new to feel invigorated more often.

Me: Are there any principles that you guys lean on when filming duo lines?
Matt: For me, it's a new concept I'm dabbling with and that we've started experimenting with together. When we started creating the first duo lines for the project, they were kind of disconnected and it became very "one person goes, then the next person goes," and towards the end of the project we were playing around more with going around each other, off each other and landing on each other.

Kevin: We kind of expanded that concept as we were filming. With how many shots it took for the first duo lines in England, we took hours to film and we were so close to giving up on them. On both lines I would start and Matt had the second line,so we might get to his part. But then getting the zinger at the end of his line proved to be really difficult and we'd di it over and over again, which means, he has to wait for me to do my part before he can even try to make his correction. Then if I mess up, we start over again and he doesn't even get the opportunity to try and complete his part. It creates a new measure of difficulty for sure.

Matt: I remember standing on top of the Singer School in Brighton, England and saying, "Hurry the fuck up, Kevin, I want to go," and Kevin has this full cardio run. He's dying on the ground and my line starts with something scary that I didn't make. So now, Kevin has to get up and do this whole run again.

Kevin: And it was fucking 30 degrees celsius and humid because it's fucking England in the summer. That line was almost the death of us. In general, we didn't have a concept for building duo lines, but we definitely got better as we explored the idea more. Especially in Germany during the second shoot. We had a clearer picture of what we wanted. And it's hard because duo lines where you're using each other as the obstacles can get really cliché. It has to be tastefully done.



A good example of tasteful duos would be Egg's duo challenges in Tether. They did a really good job of using their friends to make skills possible. But it's a fine line before you're eventually just leap frogging each other. Ultimately, I think we have many new ideas that we can explore for future projects.

Me: Of the cities you visited, which one spoke to you guys' styles the most?
Kevin: I think Hamburg was the most fun to shoot, but we also had a clearer picture of what we wanted for the project by then. We did better scouting in Hamburg, since we didn't have the luxury of living in Brighton and knowing all the spots. I think, if we had started with Hamburg and ended in Brighton, it would likely have been the opposite. Once we had a good handle on the project, it was easier to appreciate the spots and how they spoke to us.

Matt: It gave me more excitement to go to Brighton, because I was living in Hamburg at the time and had trained those spots and filmed other projects in Hamburg before. Brighton felt fresh, new and I didn't know what to expect. Hamburg felt more local. But when we really started shooting in Hamburg, we didn't go to the usual spots. I was finding new parts of the city and it felt like reviving the city a little bit. It was a nice way to get closure for me as well, because I was going to be moving away from Hamburg.
Me: Speaking on the ender - Who is the war criminal that came up with that idea? Because what the fuck is that guys?
Matt & Kevin: *laughs*

Matt: So, we were talking about this being a duo project, we would need a duo ender. Whether that was a line, move, two separate bangers, tac-ing off each other, whatever. We knew, that we both had to end the video, it couldn't just be one of us. It was coming to the second-to-last day of filming and we were fucked because the Hamburg shoot was coming to a close and we didn't have the ender.

Kevin: We wanted it to happen naturally, but we don't train duo stuff ever, so it was hard to conceptualize something on the spot.

Matt: A duo ender just isn't something you ever have to think about when filming a project. I proposed the idea of standing on a ledge, holding someone up and doing like a duo backflip.

Me: Like a fucking suplex?!
Kevin: Pretty much! I weigh less than Matt, so it was decided that I would be the one on top. It was a good idea, but also stupid, so we decided to try it in a gym first. We went to Die Halle, climbed up on the tower to give it a try and realized pretty quickly that this is really fucking hard. We were either going to land on each other or roll into each other.

Matt: So we tried other ways. Kevin sat on my shoulders and we both tried to backflip, but I had so much weight pushing down on me that I couldn't rotate, while Kevin was rotating really fast. Then, Kevin did some calculations—

Kevin: I figured that, my backflip was working, maybe we should have Matt try to front flip, so that he could lean forward and make it around.

Matt: Then it meant that I could push Kevin into his rotation, while leaning into mine. And it came together. It was one of those moves that wasn't physically so difficult but doing it outside was ridiculous. The idea of going to a spot and trying this was so fucking scary.

Kevin: Obviously, I sat on one shoulder so that he didn't have a face full of crotch. Then, it took us a good hour and a half of scaling it up in the gym. The other challenge was just getting me onto Matt's shoulders, because in the gym we didn't have the room at height for Matt to step forward or backward for balance. The spot where we were planning on doing the skill outside was over two meters tall. Even if it was soft grass at the bottom and you couldn't stand at the very edge, because the metal didn't have any support underneath. So, we had to get into position. Matt had to stand and walk a few meters with me on his shoulders to a line we drew fifteen inches from the edge, so I had to sit in a specific way as to not blind him and I couldn't hold on to him and throw off his balance. It was made even scarier by the fact that from Matt's shoulders, the drop was significantly higher, almost four meters. We did it two times: The first time we rolled easily and the second time we stuck.

Matt: I think, that move in particular took more faith from Kevin than me. He had the scary job of trusting me and leaning backwards out over a big drop. Then, I also felt that I had the responsibility to not fuck up the timing. It was a very interesting mix of roles.

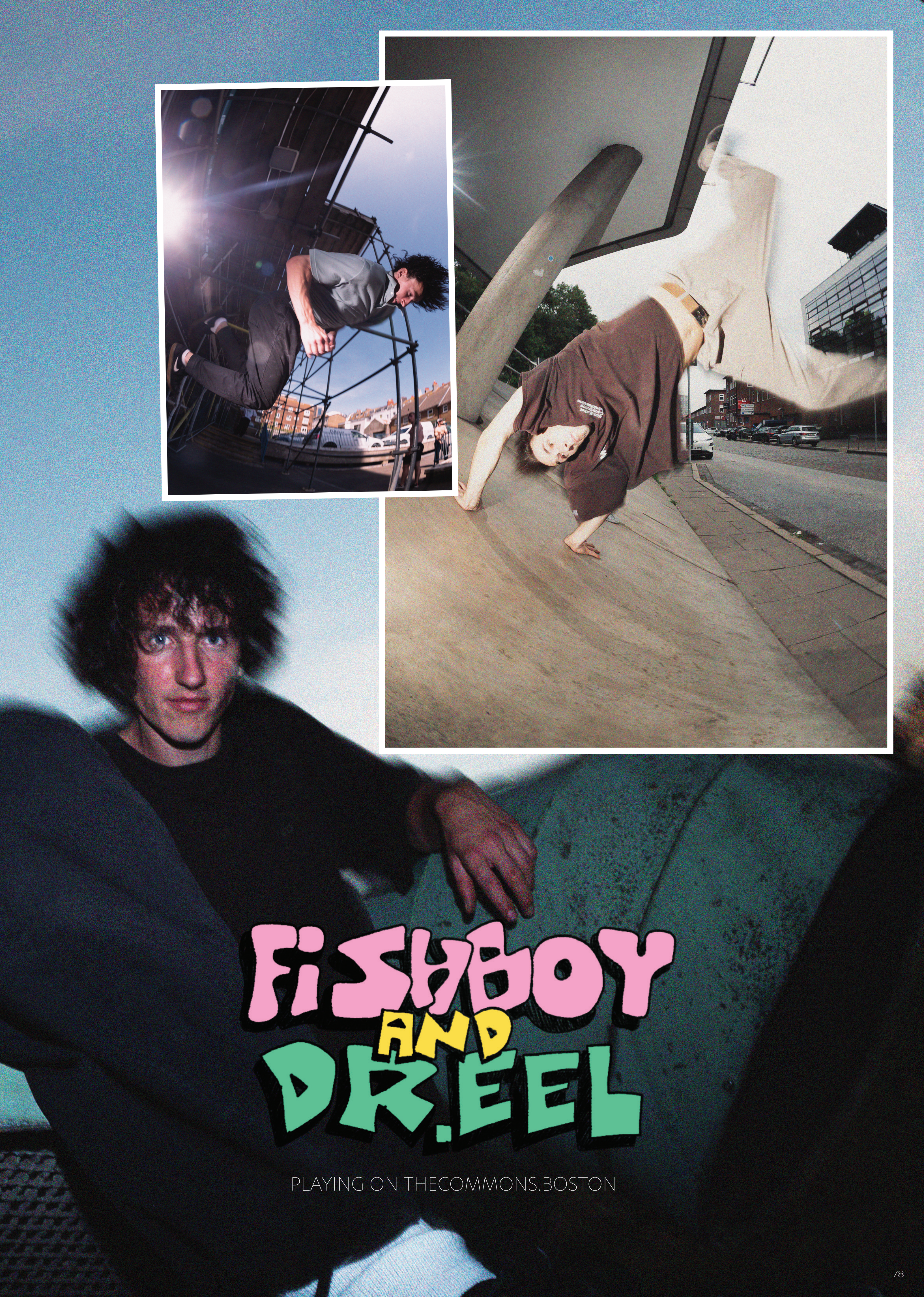
Kevin: That's why it's the ender. Not because it's physically challenging, but mentally it was very scary and quite challenging to come up with in the first place. The video isn't really about physicality per se, it's about exploration of movement.

Me: What do you have to say about your nemeses, the seagulls?
Kevin: Hate them. Nah, I'm kidding. We wanted to create some lore for the characters of Fishboy and Dr. Eel. It felt natural to have seagulls as the enemy, especially being in Brighton shooting.

Matt: I think this is only the first chapter in the battle against the seagulls. More will continue to unfold.

Kevin: The whole aquarium will have to join us to defeat the seagull menace.

VORSICHT
GEFAHR
VAULTS101



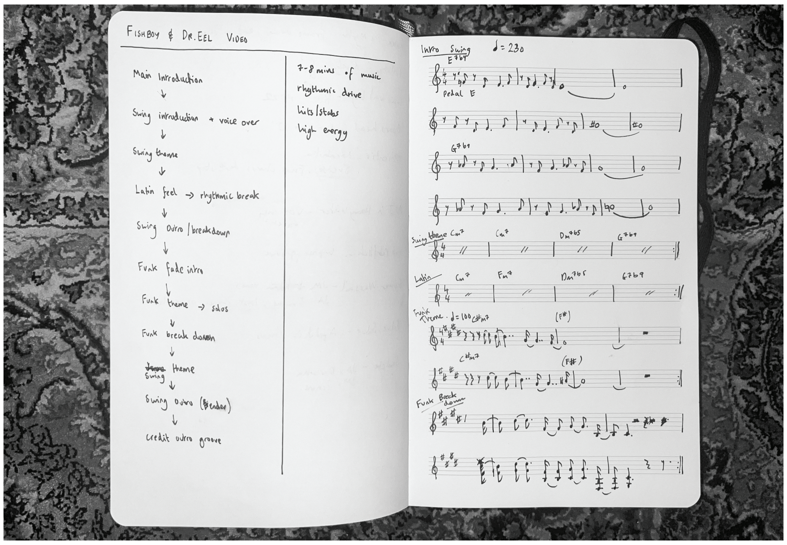
FISHBOY AND DR.EEL

PLAYING ON THECOMMONS.BOSTON

Jonny Akerman

is one of the artists who graces the parkour community with not only his movement practice, but aslo his musical talents. Johnny's passion for his craft is palpable even in digital conversation and it seems entirely fitting that he was asked to write music for the highly anticipated "Fishboy and Dr. Eel". With Jonny lending his art to the line-up of creative minds involved, one can be assured that this project will be a frolicsome romp in a class of its own. I met with Jonny in virtual to discuss his contribution to the video and the difficulties of writing music to movements that he hasn't even seen.

Interview By
Jake Chapman



FISHBOY & DR.EEL VIDEO

Main Introduction
↓
Swing introduction + voice over
↓
Swing theme
↓
Latin feel → rhythmic break
↓
Swing outro / breakdown
↓
Funk fade intro
↓
Funk theme → solos
↓
Funk break down
↓
~~Jazz~~ Swing theme
↓
Swing outro (Ender)
↓
credit outro groove

7-8 mins of music
rhythmic drive
hits/stabs
high energy

Me: How many instruments are you playing for this project?

Jonny: I'm playing all of the piano parts, programming the drums, playing all of the base parts and then eventually, I'm going to have someone come and record the brass instruments. Whilst they aren't here, I'm playing those parts on a keyboard to find the sound that I want. So at the moment, I'm doing everything.

Me: How do you ensure that your composition aligns with Kevin and Matt's idea for their video?

Jonny: I guess, the simplest thing is clear communication. Being open with every part of the process. I've said to the guys since the beginning, if there's anything you hate or even remotely dislike, just tell me. It's very easy to beat around the bush, but if it's not right, just tell me. They have told me and things are starting to really sound how they need to.

Me: Is this the first parkour project you've written music for? I know you do parkour yourself.

Jonny: It's the first serious project that I've produced the music for. I do a bit of parkour. I've trained for a few years on and off. And I did recently go to "OMFG" since they invited me out there to play some music. It was so great! I felt completely accepted by the community. It was like I can finally do the thing I love outside of parkour and do it for parkour people. And now with this video, it's like that even more so.

Me: Does your creative process change when writing music to suit a parkour video vs. a personal project?

Jonny: You know, I guess it does. When you're working on a personal thing, you don't consider the feelings of others, you just follow your own feelings. On the one hand, it's creatively coming from me, it is my feelings and emotions to a degree. But it's for someone else, it's for the feelings of other people, so the consideration is theirs. You have to try and get into the mind of the others – of the people you're working with. It's great! It can be difficult at times, but it's a great process. The main challenge for me has been that the music they want is very different from the music that I've made in the past. Actually, producing the genre has been a challenge, because jazz is such a highly demanding genre that people study for years and years. I've studied jazz, but not to the level of many others. It's definitely a challenge, but it's a good one.

Me: What kind of music do you tend to make for yourself?

Jonny: It depends on the day, how I'm feeling. I jump between some folky, classical stuff with jazz sprinkled over it to very rythmic – I guess the term is "world music" – kind of feeling, all the way to jungle and electronic dance music. It depends on what I'm feeling, what I'm listening to at the time and what happens when I sit down to write.

Me: So often it is movement being choreographed to match music. What are the challenges of writing music to match movement?

Jonny: I guess, timing is something to thing about. The hard thing is that I like to write music with the entire shape in mind. When you don't know what the entire shape of something is going to be or when it doesn't exist in that way yet, then it's hard to write something for that journey. I'm working closely with Lester, who's editing the video. So, when the music is produced, I'm going to send it to him and he's going to make an edit based on that soundtrack. Then, he's going to send it back to me and I'm going to get into the nitty gritty – really making the music to fit the movement perfectly. I think, rather than being the most challenging, it's the most fun part. You get to really explore the movement with the sound directly. There are no unknowns. Every move, every part of the video is going to have a specific sound and that's what I'm going to do.

Me: How long have you been writing and composing music?

Jonny: I've been writing music for years, since I was very young making things up on the piano. I got down to serious writing five or six years ago. That's when I discovered my passion to actually buckle down and do it.

Me: How long did it take to write the music for Fishboy and Dr. Eel?

Jonny: It's still ongoing at the minute. Writing music is a complicated process. Ideally what I'd like is a full week to focus on this project, but our lives are busy. So, I've had a day here or an afternoon there to spend some time working on the music. It's been maybe a few full days worth of work, which isn't all writing. You have to be creative and have to bring all of these different ideas together. Some of them yours, some of your client's. It can be a long process of going back and forth suggesting changes and revising.

Me: Not to mention that – like me – you've only seen a few clips of the movement at this point. So you're building all of this music around a skeleton of a video! What's that like?

Jonny: The guys have been great about working with me and being specific about their ideas and what kind of music they're looking for. Like, what the energy is from the video. You can see it from the clips and the description of the music, that what they want is very well partnered with the movement that I have seen. Trying to bring that out is hard, but it's very clear.

Me: Can you give me the description you received?

Jonny: Yeah, I think I can accurately paraphrase what they said. What they want is this "rhythym-based jazz/soul fusion, that has life in it". Something very fast paced and alive. It's quite clear, which is great for me.

5
cold washing
Take out laundry and be sure not to leave anything inside.
Please leave door open.
Aus Rücksicht auf unsere Kunden
Das Waschen von Wischm
ist nicht e
WICHTIG!
Wäsche sortieren
Important!
Sort out textiles
BEDIENUNGSANLEITUNG
4
7
8

Interview with
Giles Campbell Longely
Written by
Jake Chapman
Photography by
Joel Larsson

STORROR®

Storror started their clothing brand years ago with a one-off t-shirt as a merchandising initiative. It grew really well for the time, and that is the way the brand has functioned for many years. As Drew and the others became more interested in streetwear themselves, they tried to shift the style of Storror as a brand. This was not without the occasional misstep. One of the biggest struggles Storror has dealt with is applying the correct amount of time to the clothing aspect of their business. In recent years, Storror has been incredibly successful between commercial work and the team's weekly YouTube releases, and it became difficult to divert the necessary attention away from content and towards developing the streetwear aesthetic they want.

I think that's where my help has really come into play because I can focus solely on the clothing in both design and business capacities. We're still far off from where we want Storror to be. It's been tough because much of the Storror audience see the clothing as 'YouTuber merch', whereas we want to present ourselves as a streetwear brand. Growth for us is a case of aligning those ideas.

As the brand continues to grow and evolve, so does the style we try to represent. Creating an aesthetically pleasing garment is important to us, but we also want the product to be able to mesh with the Storror brand in a way that feels organic. We consider those things to be vitally important. Not every product we drop is going to be liked by everyone, let alone by all the members of Storror. There is this decision-making process of deciding what products we make or design, how many items we play it safe with, how many risks we take, all before anyone even mentions colorways or those specific details. One can't put all their eggs in the 'I want this because I think it's cool,' basket. To make it work we have to be conscious about how much we're spending on the collection as a whole, lead times, when it can even come out, how much it's going to cost the consumer; there are a myriad of issues to assess. It gets easier with time and we've established working parameters that allow us to provide products that we really believe in without our releases becoming inaccessibly expensive.

There's no denying that Storror has become a household name in parkour. Granted, not everyone wears Storror and there's this misconception that the team is somehow bigger than parkour. That's part of our image that we want to recalibrate. This year, we've been rebuilding the foundation of the clothing business and next year will be about really improving what we're offering, aligning the brand aesthetic, and touching base with the parkour community and shining a spotlight on those individuals, teams, etc. who deserve the illumination. When it comes to fashion, our goal moving forward is to make relevant streetwear that has its feet firmly planted in parkour. We are striving to make practical gear that has merit even outside of the immediate parkour sphere, and draws appreciation to the sport by tapping into the insane potential that is the Storror Army.

STORROR
EPAL

Drew is fully involved from step one, either designing the initial concepts or sourcing and approving a designer. The other guys have a hand in the mix and sometimes are content not to be involved at all. It varies by the project. “Cavemen” is unique, because Max and Benj are providing all the art design. This year’s “Cavemen” drops involved Drew, Max, Benj, myself, and a couple of the others chiming in. Recently, Bloggy has been putting a lot of work into some very specific technical pieces like trousers and outerwear. His first designs for Storror were the zip-off cargo pants and jackets, and the sling bag and backpack were redesigned by Bloggy as well.

We’ve begun moving away from releasing whole collections when it comes to those pieces, that way we can really showcase the technicality and craftsmanship without watering down their impact in a larger release. Parkour fashion, in my cynical English opinion, has a tendency to draw too much influence from relevant trends, and suffers from a lack of purpose to the design. There aren’t that many people thinking about functionality or fits specific to parkour, and that’s something that we’re really putting a great deal of focus on. We can’t do it with every product because it takes serious time, but it’s going to be evident that there’s been real thought behind the pieces as parkour garments. It’s one thing to market a pair of trousers or a hoodie that’s in line with a current trend, it’s another thing to merge the trend with a parkour perspective. We feel that approach will make our future releases a true representation of parkour and of Storror.

Regarding the near future, we have a lot of designs in development. Some we won’t see until next winter; others will drop periodically throughout spring. The next shoe is still in development, and it has involved sampling with three different factories to find the right supplier. We’re reaching a point where we feel the shoe getting close, though it could still be some time yet. We have also been working on collaborations with some amazing artists. We’ve learned that regular releases are necessary to create a broad enough offering for the fanbase that Storror has garnered, and to stay engaged with the community. We’re interested in attending more parkour events and doing pop-up shops. We think we’re moving in the right direction, and we’re genuinely excited about Storror’s next chapter.

Doppeltes Volumen
Bedienung wie
Normale Maschinen
Oversize machines
Double volumes
Operating like
FIRBITEX
FIRBITEX
17
18

"BRILNC"

Niko Selski in ‘Lullaby’
Shot by Noah Heat

Interview by
Joel Larsson
Written by
Kevin Franzén
Photography by
Lilou Ruel
Hazal Nehir
Lisa Schneider

GATECRASHER

"Ever since Renae Dambly and Lisa Scheider announced the making of an all-female long format parkour video called "Gatecrasher", the parkour-world have been eager to see its release. From an overwhelming support on KickStarter to the continuous sharing of their promotion material, this project has been hard to miss. As we slowly near the official release date, we decided to sit down and have a conversation with the makers of "Gatecrasher" on how this massive project came to be."
- Kevin Franzén

How long has GateCrasher been in the works? How did you go from having the idea, to making it happen?

Lisa Schneider:
I think Renae sent me a voice message back in October 2022, where she told me that she had this idea to make an all-women parkour film, and I was like "I had the same idea, should we just do it together?"

Renae Dambly:
Yeah, we then decided to collaborate and that's how it was born. After that it came down to deciding who we wanted on the team, and all the details from there on.

What vision did you two have when you were planning this project? Did you have a clear view of what you wanted to create?

R: It was pretty straightforward for me. I wanted to create something that would highlight female movement. I was really inspired by the YouTube video "Movement 3" directed by Julie Angel, the super old one, which had three women in it. It highlighted each of their unique movement skills, which really inspired me. I wanted to create something similar to this. Something that would give you the same feeling that that video gave me. I wanted it to leave a mark.

L: For me, a lot of my inspiration came from snowboarding videos. Particularly one all-female snowboarding video called "Hot Coco". And like Renae said, we wanted to show the variety of the female movement in the scene. We had some chats about making something capstone-like at the start of it all, but we went away from that pretty quickly because we wanted everyone to be able to express themselves the way they wanted to. We did not want to make people feel like they needed to move in a certain direction. The main goal was to show what women are capable of and how wide the range of movement can be.

You had a very successful KickStarter campaign. Where did the idea of a KickStarter emerge from and how did you turn it into reality?

R: We spent weeks and weeks writing pitches and thinking of the best way to present our idea so that people would see what we saw in this project. Lisa and I were chatting about this and met up during lunch to work on it. It definitely felt like a university project at times. One time, we sat in a cafe in Brighton and asked ourselves, "OK, what's a realistic budget for this?" One of the biggest goals for me was to try to change the approach towards parkour projects. Someday, I want to see us being able to pay our athletes and our crew, thus helping people make a living off of parkour. That is one of my big motivators. So Lisa and I sat down and went through who we needed on the production team. What are realistic numbers to pay an athlete or a crew member? What's idealistic and what's realistic? And that's how we found our budget. We consulted people who we knew have worked in the industry to get a good gauge on the numbers. We calculated that if we wanted to make this into a professional piece with everyone getting a fair wage, its budget would have been around 80,000 euros. This included travel costs, food costs, accommodation costs on top of crew fees adding up to 16,000 euros for a group of 12. In the end, everyone got paid about one percent of their actual worth. That brought our budget to a total of around 30,000 euros.

L: We did try to get external sponsors. For months, we reached out to companies asking to help fund the film. We sort of thought – considering who's involved – that people would be interested in sponsoring something like this, but no one was. Then we wanted to create a GoFundMe, but we wanted to give the donor something in return. As an example, if you donate 50 euros, you would get a T-shirt or something like that. We realized that GoFundMe doesn't enable that, so we resorted to KickStarter. On KickStarter you have to start a whole campaign. You have to create a description video, write a whole pitch and make it look pretty. A shitload of work went into that. In the end, that was how we managed to raise our budget of 35,000 euros.

R: We had so many people with interesting talents on our project: Hazal Nehir and Lilou Rouel are into photography, Tamilla Ben and Lisa Eckert are artists and Hannah Shi and I also do our own personal art. KickStarter kind of allowed us to highlight our group's qualities and share them while simultaneously raising money, which was a really cool aspect of that platform!

L: We did have a couple of sponsors outside of the KickStarter: Evan Beyer – MGO Woodworking, ParkourUK & Matt LaRose. We wanted to make sure that even if we didn't reach our goal we still would have some funding. KickStarter unfortunately has an all-or-nothing concept, meaning if we didn't reach the 30k, we would not have gotten anything. That was why we asked the above-mentioned to sponsor us on the side and not to put it on KickStarter. We were scared that we wouldn't reach the goal.

R: We are aware of the fact that our community likes to make passion projects and not get any money from it. There's a bit of an internal conflict of "crap, do we ask them, or do we not?" It felt like we were asking a lot from the community. On top of posting posters on instagram, we did a presentation at an event in Denmark called International Gathering, which is a great opportunity to meet community-driven people. We're very thankful that a lot of the people from that event helped us out.

L: In the end, we decided to just go for it. Even though we were struggling with the fact that the community doesn't usually give money, we thought that if you want to support this project financially, you could do so. It was such a surprise to see how many people were actually willing to support us and we are still very grateful for them.

I'd like to add that a big reason why we did get so much money is because we put so much work into collecting it. If we hadn't tried to raise money and had just said, "everyone travels on their own expenses and we can't pay anyone", there would not have been an extra four months of work solely put into the funding of this project.

What was your experience when you were out at the different locations and filming? How was the day of filming for you? Were you waking up early or late? Did you have anything in particular you wanted to get or did you just go out as a group and let everyone be free until you got something you were happy with?

L: We all were really lazy in the mornings. We wasted so much time chilling in the morning, having breakfast, and we'd usually go out around midday. I think quite a few people had goals for the trip. I know Lilou, for example, wanted to do a cool gainer pre. I think the athletes had looked into the cities and the spots we would visit and sort of had ideas of what they wanted to do. We did have a couple of spots in mind. Some of them we went to, some of them we didn't. After a while, people just found their challenges and started to tick them off. I don't know – it sort of just naturally flowed a bit, you know?

R: Yeah, Vienna was easier. We scouted Vienna and Bratislava ahead of time, so that we did have a spot list. Since I had the privilege of already seeing some of the spots, I definitely had certain challenges in my head that I wanted to get done. After the first few days of being in a city, the girls would pick challenges or areas that they wanted to film in, and that's how we scheduled the second half of the week.

So the first half of the week usually revolved around exploring the city. And then the last two or three days in a city were when people were like, "OK, today I'm going to this spot. I'm filming at this time. I need one or two camera people." Regardless, we definitely had relaxed mornings where we slept in.

L: I think it was needed as well, since we were filming for three weeks. If you just go out every single day at 8am, you'll be fucked after a week. I personally could not go on like that for three weeks.

R: We really emphasized that the athletes should do what they felt was comfortable for them.
That's why we didn't structure much or had a daily schedule. We wanted the athlete to be as comfortable as possible.

L: I was definitely worried about pushing people. I think I was a bit too laidback, to be honest. I mean – we were still making a video. It was really hard to find a balance between doing what you're comfortable with and also getting stuff done within our deadline.

Following up on what you said before, you were twelve athletes from the start?

R: I think there were nine athletes and four camera people who came and went. Not everyone stayed at the same time. In total, I think we were fifteen people. We also had surprise athletes that you'll see in the film. In addition to the large group, every city had a guest athlete, minus Vienna. We had Stani from Bulgaria coming out for Bratislava. We had Louisa Chang come out for Budapest. Lynn Jung was there taking photos for ParkourUK.

L: Managing all those people, making sure everyone had a bed, making sure everyone had food and organizing all of this – yeah, it was a lot. To be fair though, I bruised my heel on the third day, so I was sort of chilling after that. I couldn't properly train until the very last week and because of that it was easy to do more of the organizational things.

How was your experience with having so many different people with different backgrounds and different perspectives work together?

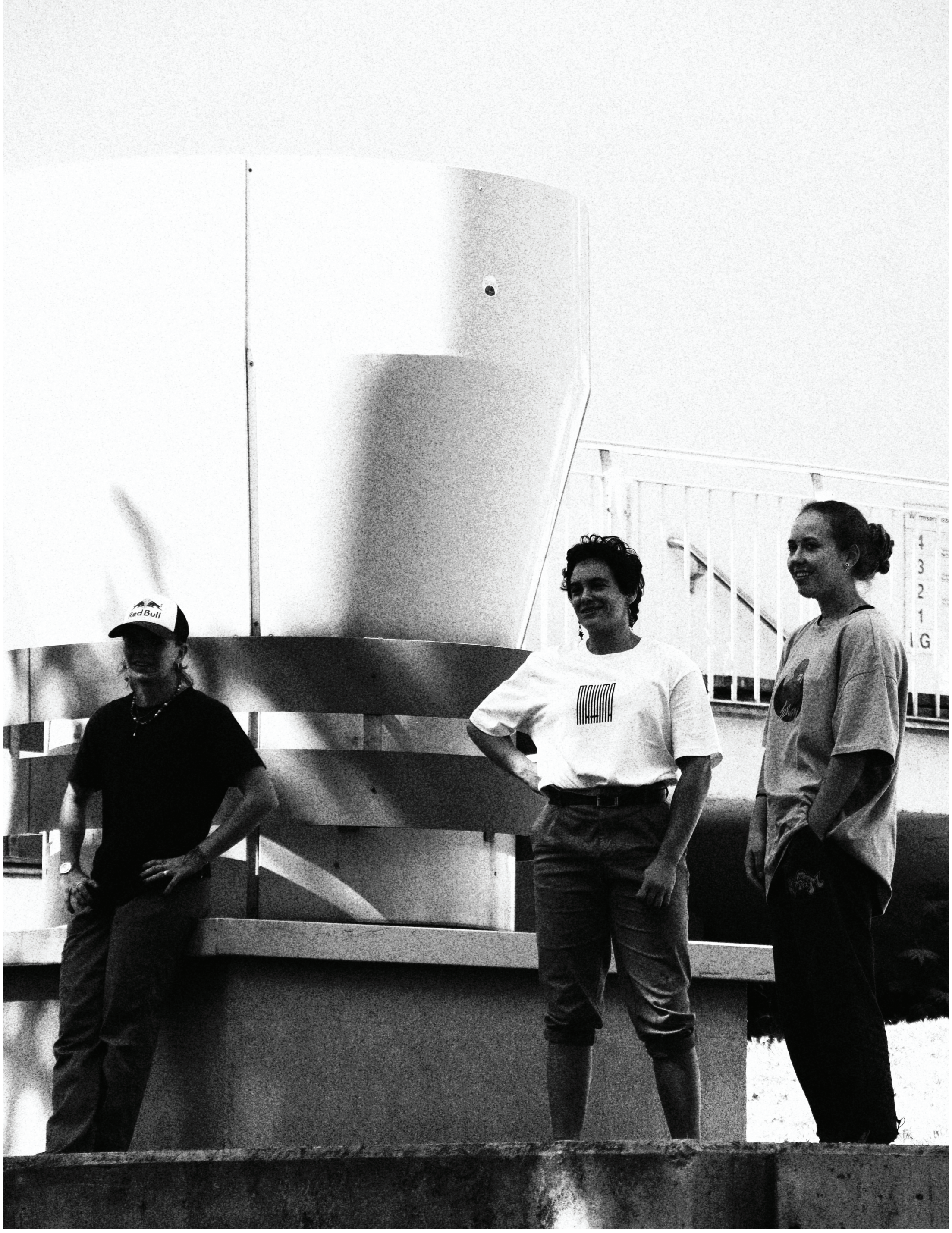
R: Everyone did a really great job working together. In the end, working with such a large group, it was hard to stay together all of the time. Everyone has their own preferences for spots. Some people look at a spot and come up with nothing whereas some people look at that spot and they see the challenge of the week. What was really nice was that people were quite accepting of that. If someone saw something in a spot but no one else did, we acknowledged it anyways. I think everyone was mindful of each other's style and communicated that.

L: Personality wise, I think we gathered a really great group. It was really nice to see the change in people from the start to the end, like how people came out of their shells and felt more and more comfortable in creating. And I think everyone did a good job at allowing that and giving people the space to do so. Having so many different styles in one place was quite interesting since everyone tried each other's challenges and got out of their own comfort zones.

What type of video is this going to be?

L: The focus is going to be on the action and the personalities of the athletes. We're not going to have a narrative or an underlying story. We did film some on-the-spot interviews, but we didn't have time to actually sit down and conduct interviews like Point A did for Queen City. It'll be a lot of action cut down alongside lots of B-roll and behind the scenes footage. We really want to bring out people's personalities in it while still keeping the focus on the action. Toby is currently doing selects, and once he's done, we'll probably have a better answer to this.

R: We didn't want to go the usual route of a documentary because we thought there are enough action-documentaries on parkour. We're kind of on the middle ground between finding a connection with the athlete and maintaining a high entertainment value by including action. I want non-practitioners to be able to watch GateCrasher and be like, "oh, OK,



that's how they think" or "I get it now." In short, to better understand the sport and why we do what we do.

How do you view the value of this kind of project? This coming into our community, how important is it and what do you think the effect of it will be?

L: I think it'll have big value because it's the first piece of its kind. There are so many incredibly high class female athletes in this video. I'm sort of expecting it to have a lot of impact and hopefully make a difference to when we ourselves started to train. We only had a handful of people to look up to. Hopefully, this video is going to act as an inspiration for girls in the beginning stages. Then they already have 12 incredible athletes to look up to. In that sense, I think it'll have a big impact since you've just got all of this talent combined in one video.

R: Like Lisa said, I've never seen a video like this done before with female athletes. It's going to be so exciting to have all of that talent on-screen. I think it's going to make a huge impact on female representation in sports, especially parkour. Hopefully, it's going to inspire and motivate people to make more videos and build up the courage to ask for compensation for their skills. To get a bit more specific, we hope to create something out of this in terms of jobs. If you're someone who wants to see female talent and you want to support that, this is going to be for you.

L: One thing we really struggled with when we were reaching out to companies for sponsoring, was that we didn't have a reference yet. When this video comes out, we're going to be able to say, "Look, this is the reach that we got, this is what we can do with this amount of money, this is how much impact a project like this can have." I think it's important to have a project to be able to show as a demo for future projects. A big reason why companies did not want to get involved was because we couldn't guarantee them a certain outcome. But after having done it once, the first film could act as an insurance for these companies.

R: I think regardless of the gender difference, it's still going to have a huge impact because of how it was made. As we were saying, there's Capstone and Sole Destroyer, and then there's Queen City. I haven't seen a lot of hybrid productions like ours. I've seen both documentaries or action pieces, but never a mixture. That in itself is a very unique and different production all together. It's really exciting to see how people will take it.

L: I'm so excited to see the end product because we're just talking about something that's going to be created. We haven't seen it yet. It's sort of hard to say right now.

Do you have any idea of the time frame for it?

L: Yeah, it'll come out latest in April. But that's another thing. Toby Segar is editing and we can't tell him that we want to get it done by a certain date because we can't pay him what we should pay someone with a full-time job. And we don't have the money to get anyone else involved in editing it.

R: When you can't pay your crew for their work, it's hard to prioritize it.

L: Yeah, and that makes it even more amazing that we had so many people that got involved and helped us out with it because no one got paid what they should have got paid.

R: We were really lucky with the crew. We had dedicated people, so we're really grateful.

Can you run down who was out there filming with you?

L: Hannah Snow was there for the whole time. We had Kelan Ryan for the first week and then Dennis Korra came out for ten days. Lastly, Max Henry came out for the last week or so.
Max Henry and Sean Andrews also helped with producing. It's a collaboration with Point A productions.

I think you have said that it's coming out on YouTube, right?

L: Yes, it will be coming out on YouTube on the Point A channel.

I remember you saying that you want the project to be seen by as many people as possible. Therefore, you kind of have to put it on YouTube, but at the same time it's such a fucking bummer because it seems that we're starting to get to a point where people are actually starting to see the value in buying a project.

L: Yeah, I think it really depends on if you want the project to reach people outside of the community because pay-per-views are – unless you're huge – mainly going to reach the active community. We want this project to go beyond the community, and that's a big reason why we wanted to put it on YouTube. Regardless of that, I think we're going in a really good direction with pay-per-view projects. It's already amazing to see that.

Parkour in Amsterdam is dead!

let's bring it back from the grave...
SAFIER
ATTENTIE

Eulogy by Francesco Kamstra, Dave Alvar and Tobias Roest for Amsterdam's soon to be demolished iconic spot, Amstelstation

Amsterdam

The parkour scene in Amsterdam used to be booming. There was a community actively training on the streets and jams were pretty common, bringing athletes together from all over the country. Some iconic spots like Amstel and Johnny are still cemented in old parkour videos.

However, nowadays there aren't a lot of people left who train outside. This is pretty weird since parkour in the Netherlands has become more popular than ever before. The growth of the sport has gone hand in hand with its commercialization, making it so that the vast majority of practitioners in the Netherlands only know training indoors in a gym. This change in parkour has made the community in Amsterdam a lot less connected to the streets and therefore to each other. That's a big part of why we felt so compelled to film a project in Amsterdam. Not only to showcase our city, but also to bring life back into the community.

Dave's facial expression says it all; shit's getting serious

SAFIER
BOMBACLAT!

Who else could it be but Andrés Latorre, hitting a jump that's never been done before at Sloterdijk.

Also, Andrés two minutes later signing a piece of handrail from his landing

AMADI PANORAMA

Tobias bringing the hype in this windy alleyway on IJburg

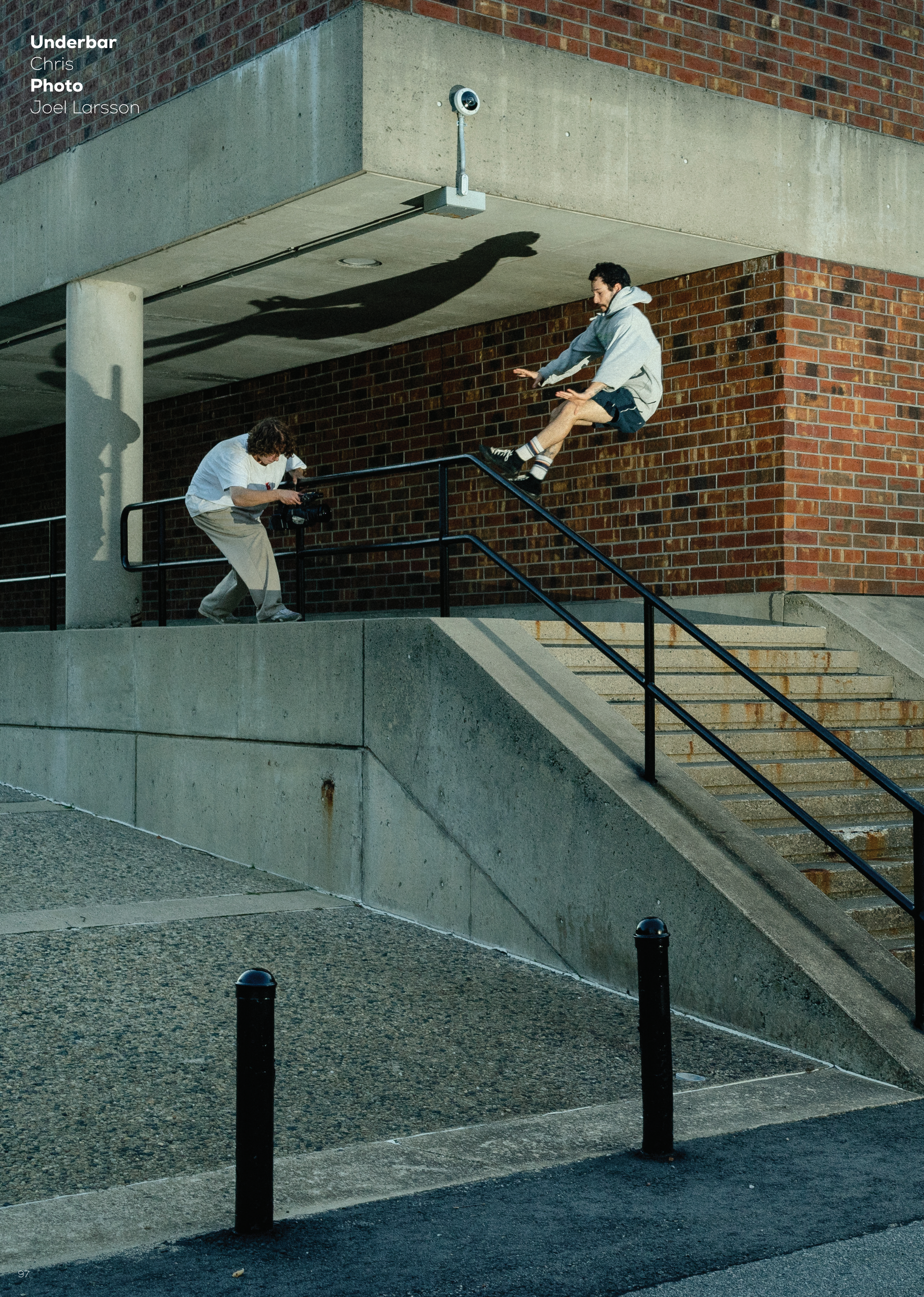
Francesco enjoying his free beer after impressing a local skipper

The Project

This video project kicks off our 'fé amsterdam' initiative and the comeback of the Amsterdam street scene. Fé amsterdam (formerly known as Fit Earth) is currently the only organization teaching outside based parkour in the Netherlands. Francesco Kamstra and Dave Alvar from 'fé' came together with Amsterdam's finest: Tobias Roest and Safier Elzinga, to create something the Dutch parkour scene has never seen before. The project features over 25 athletes making it a refreshing combination of movement, tons of love and passion for the cause and above all, loads of creative minds working together on something special.

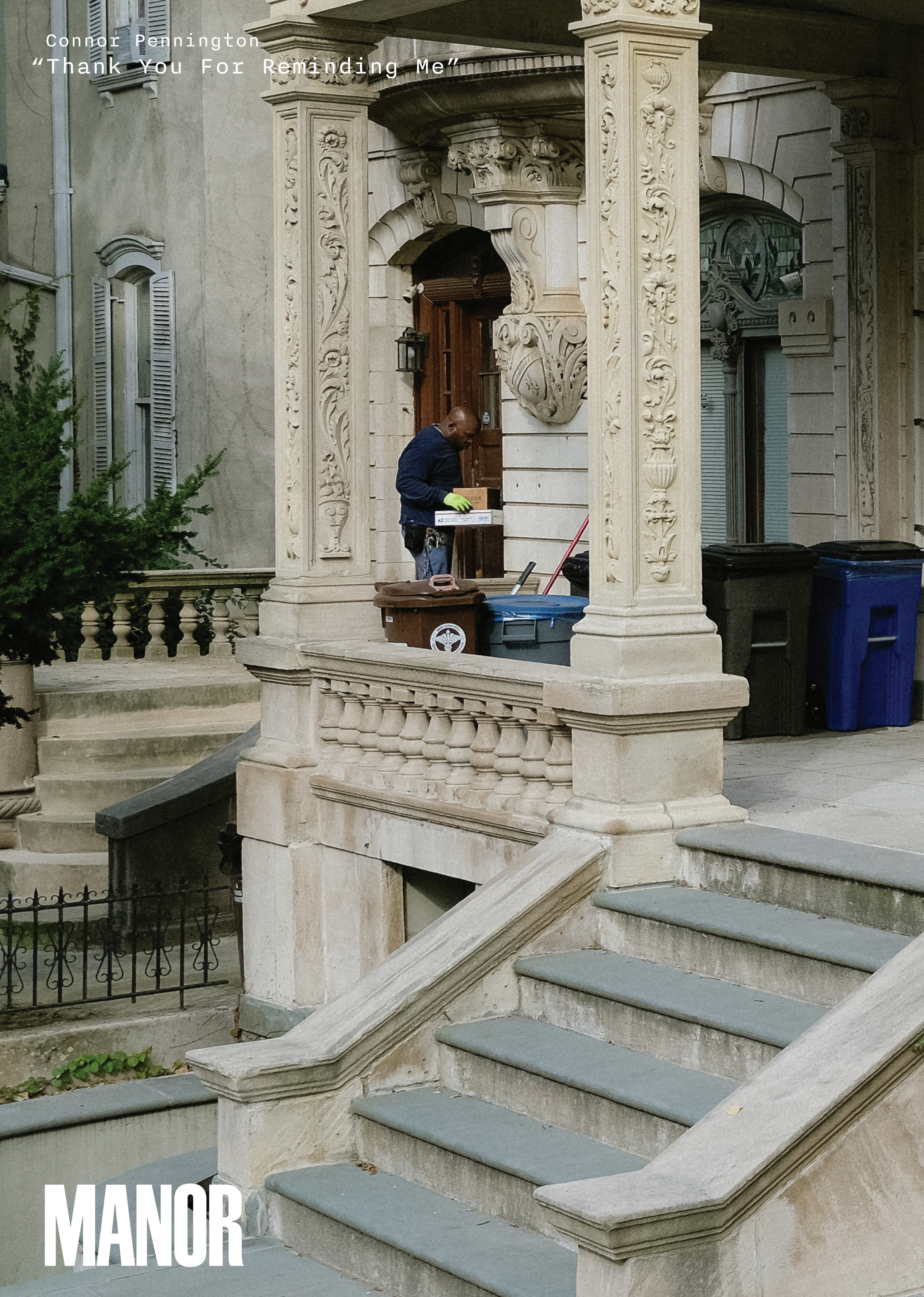
The Amsterdam project is premiering during a community screening event at the fé amsterdam location on May 11th. It's going to be refreshing, something you'd definitely want to drink, if it were a beverage.

SAFIER
damn, i need a drink after all that filming!



Underbar
Chris
Photo
Joel Larsson

KIPA BOSTON PROJECT IN THE WORKS



Connor Pennington
“Thank You For Reminding Me”

MANOR

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